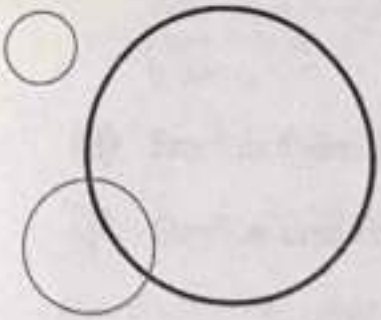
Starfish Swim Instructor Workbook

An ages-and-stages approach to teaching lifetime swim skills

STARFISH SWIMMING
Instructor Certification Program

Starfish Swim Instructor Workbook

Starfish Aquatics Institute



Human Kinetics

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Preface

Welcome to Starfish Swimming, a division of the Starfish Aquatics Institute. Our organization's vision is "Saving Lives One At A Time." Your role as an instructor is a very important part of this vision. Teaching swimming saves lives! Not only are you teaching a life-saving skill, you are teaching a lifetime activity to each and every student.

The philosophy of Starfish Swimming is based on the following core beliefs:

- A relationship exists between instructor behaviors and student performance.
- Students learn in different ways and have different readiness levels.
- The focus should be on ability, not disability, and achievement, not errors.
- Multiple methods of instruction, including "learn by doing," results in higher levels of student performance.
- Effective instructional methods can be learned and developed.

The result is an instructor development system and curriculum that is focused and effective.

You may be wondering how you fit into all of this, and have questions such as:

- **How will I be trained?** Chapter 1 explains the instructor development process, and the worksheets you will use during orientation are contained in the appendix.
- **What does it take to be an effective swimming instructor?** Chapter 2 explains elements of effective teaching.
- **What courses will I teach?** Chapter 3 describes the courses that make up the Starfish Swimming curriculum, and chapter 4 provides you with effective implementation strategies.
- **What skills are taught in each course and how are students evaluated and rewarded?** The Core Competencies teaching model and Competency Assessment Performance (CAP) system are described in chapter 5 for StarBabies, chapter 6 for Swim School, chapter 7 for Stroke School, chapter 8 for Swim Team, and chapter 9 for StarFun and Fitness.
- **What other resources are available?** The appendix contains worksheets used for orientation, as well as water safety rhymes and a log sheet for your teaching ideas.

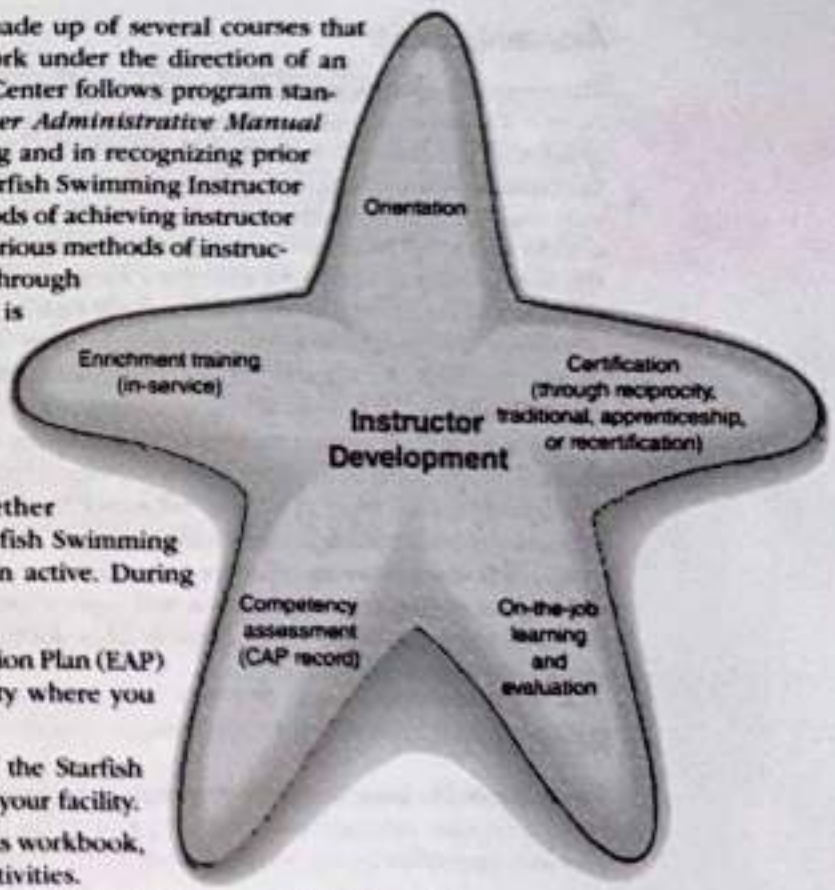
Use this workbook as a reference guide. It is not intended to be a comprehensive textbook. Instead, the format is designed to summarize key points visually. It will help you anticipate, reinforce, and focus your experiences as you move through the instructor development process and complete your apprenticeship.

We often use a starfish to represent concepts visually. The five appendages of the starfish are each independent but of equal importance. The appendages all join and support the center core of the starfish. This integration and balance is the foundation of what we believe to be an important new direction in teaching swimming and aquatic safety.

1

Starfish Swim Instructor Development

The Starfish Swimming curriculum is made up of several courses that are taught by swim instructors who work under the direction of an approved training center. The Training Center follows program standards published in the *Training Center Administrative Manual* (TCAM). We believe in learning by doing and in recognizing prior experience and talent. As a result, the Starfish Swimming Instructor development system offers several methods of achieving instructor certification. This chapter explains the various methods of instructor development, from your orientation through the enrichment training process that is ongoing even after you begin teaching.



Orientation

All swim instructor candidates, whether new or experienced, must attend a Starfish Swimming orientation session each year to remain active. During orientation, you will:

- Receive safety and Emergency Action Plan (EAP) information specific to the facility where you will teach.
- Learn about the organization of the Starfish Swimming courses conducted at your facility.
- Discuss the topics included in this workbook, and complete the worksheet activities.
- Learn to use your Competency Assessment Performance (CAP) Record.
- Receive administrative information specific to your training center (i.e., uniform policy, employee policy, etc.).

Certification

There are several methods of development that lead to certification as a swim instructor. The method that you choose will depend on your experience and the process that is in place at the training center for which you will teach. Certification can be earned through reciprocity, by taking a traditional instructor development course, through apprenticeship, or through recertification.

Reciprocity

An experienced instructor with existing credentials from another nationally recognized swim instruction program may be granted certification after attending the orientation.

Traditional

The traditional course consists of 40 hours of instruction, divided into ten 4-hour sessions. The first 8 hours satisfy the requirement for the Starfish Swimming orientation. Your training center has the option to only certify you for specific courses or stages within the Starfish Swimming program, which may shorten the number of sessions that you are required to attend.

Apprenticeship

The apprenticeship method of instructor development is an alternative to the traditional SSI course. The apprenticeship option provides hands-on training experience, flexibility in scheduling, and the ability to become authorized to teach specific stages as progress is made. For example, if you enjoy teaching non-swimmers who are fearful, you may decide to achieve only the White stage instructor authorization. If you desire to work with individuals across a wide variety of abilities from beginner through advanced stroke technique, you will have the opportunity to earn your instructor ratings at all stages—the choice and length of time it takes will be up to you and your training center administrators.

During your apprenticeship, you will coteach with one or more individuals who have earned the rank of a mentor. The selection of mentors is based on experience, teaching ability, and willingness to help others in a supportive manner.

You will coteach with a mentor for a minimum of eight classes at each stage. Based on your performance during your apprenticeship assignments the mentor may recommend that you receive certification as a swim instructor for that stage. Final certification decisions will be made by your training center administrators.

You will learn to be an effective instructor by actually teaching, not just talking about or reading about teaching. Your mentor will serve as your role model and help you stay focused on developing improved swim skills in your students. Your mentor will provide you with invaluable experience and ideas.

Recertification

You will need to complete a recertification course prior to your expiration date.

Competency Assessment and Performance (CAP) Record

Your progress through the swim instructor development process will be tracked using a Competency Assessment and Performance (CAP) record. The CAP record folder is your permanent record of successful completion of the orientation, training courses, apprenticeship, in-service, and teaching hours, and the instructor levels you have been awarded. Your CAP record folder will serve as a valuable resource for you and your training center in helping you achieve your goals as a swim instructor.

Starfish Swim Instructor Registry

Authorized training centers are required to maintain a record of your successful completion of the various stages of swim instructor development. These records are kept online using the Starfish Swim Instructor Registry. The SSI Registry is used to track CAP numbers of swim instructors who are certified to teach Starfish Swimming courses. Your training center will be responsible for making sure that your information is entered into the SSI Registry and kept current.

On-the-Job Learning and Evaluation

You will quickly find that every student will teach you how to be a better instructor. Even after years of experience, effective instructors are always developing new approaches and different techniques, and adding to their "treasure box" of ideas and activities.

This does not mean that your methods will become random and unfocused. The Starfish Swimming curriculum is structured so that the foundation remains constant. You will always strive to help your students achieve "benchmark skills." The benchmark skills are the building blocks of competency in the water. They develop aquatic readiness for advanced stroke development. You will always know the specific objective your students are trying to achieve, and therefore, you will have the opportunity to be creative and use your best talents to help make it happen.

Receiving feedback about your performance as an instructor will help you improve. A Satisfaction Monitor is completed by each student (or the parent or guardian) after each course. The questions that relate to your performance are shown in table 1.1.

In-Service Training

In-service sessions conducted by your training center will help you continue to grow and improve your teaching by providing you with the opportunity to analyze, review, share, and create with other instructors.

As you can see, swim instructor development does not end with certification. It continues for as long as you are teaching a Starfish Swimming program. Now that you understand the methods for instructor development, chapter 2 will describe the types of behaviors that will make you an effective swim instructor.

Table 1.1 On-the-Job Evaluation

Please rate your experience for the following:

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Fair	Poor
ORGANIZATION					
Classes start and end on time					
Handouts are professional and informative					
Time is used effectively					
Classes are orderly and efficient					
Comments:					
INSTRUCTORS AND STAFF					
Positive and friendly					
Takes an interest in the individual student					
Meets individual needs					
Keeps students active and engaged					
Instructor communication					
Comments:					
SAFETY AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT					
Lifeguard or child watcher on duty					
Used rescue tube					
Child improved understanding of safety skills					
Child improved swimming skills					
Comments:					
OVERALL EXPERIENCE					
Overall experience					
Likelihood of continuing in this program					
Level of water safety information presented to me					
Comments:					

2

Elements of Effective Teaching

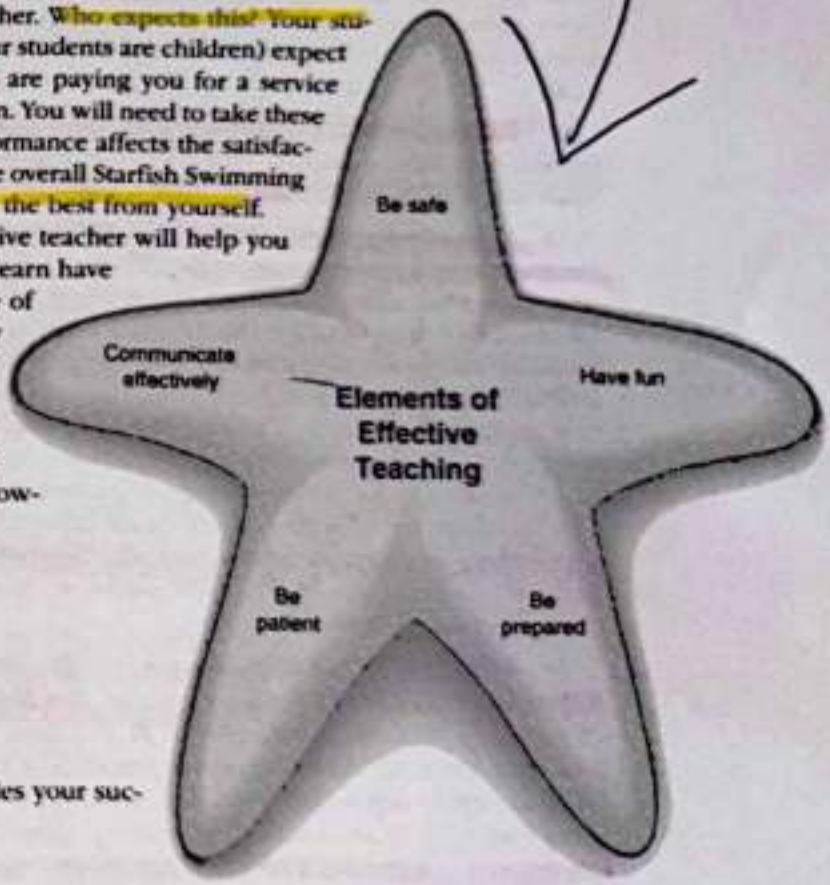
You are expected to be an effective teacher. Who expects this? Your students (and the parents or guardians if your students are children) expect quality instruction. Parents or guardians are paying you for a service and also entrusting you with their children. You will need to take these responsibilities very seriously. Your performance affects the satisfaction with your training center and with the overall Starfish Swimming program. In addition, you should expect the best from yourself.

The pride you take in being an effective teacher will help you to grow as a person. The skills you will learn have tremendous crossover value and will be of benefit to you now as well as with any career or opportunity you pursue in the future.

There are many specific behaviors that result in effective teaching. These behaviors can be summarized in the following five core components:

- Be safe.
- Have fun.
- Be prepared.
- Be patient.
- Communicate effectively.

Being proficient in these five areas guides your success.



Be Safe

Safety comes first. Follow these guidelines any time you or your students are in or near the water:

1. *Keep all of your students in your line of sight at all times.* You should never turn your back to your students, no matter what their ability level appears to be. When working with

only part of your class, position yourself so that the students that you are working with are between you and the rest of the class. Students who are not yet able to tread water or swim independently should be kept within an arm's reach. Remember that you are responsible for all of your students. Do not depend on the lifeguard to be the only pair of eyes.

2. *Develop a specific procedure for beginning and ending class.* It is imperative that students ask permission before getting into the water. Students should ask permission of the person who brought them to the lessons. If parents or caregivers are not allowed on deck, students should ask the instructor for permission. Asking permission before each lesson will develop good and safe habits for the aquatic environment. Students should not enter the water unless under your direction and supervision. Consistency is the key. Choose similar activities to begin and end each class. Beginning each class with the same activities will keep you from struggling to get your class together (i.e., read a poem from the *Can Starfish Make a Wish?* book). Ending each class with the same activity will also keep you from struggling to get your class out of the water. Choose activities that are fun and engaging, such as one of the experiential learning activities (i.e., Treasure Hunt) located at the end of chapters 5 and 6.

3. *Wear a rescue tube.* The rescue tube is an excellent teaching aid. You can float with it, kick on it, swim under and around it, and even wrestle it. The rescue tube can also be used to develop proper streamline and side glide positions. The rescue tube also helps to identify you as an instructor. You will look more professional with the rescue tube as part of your uniform. The rescue tube should be used to assist or rescue students in distress. Rescue tubes are essential to keeping you and your students safe, especially when teaching in deep water.

4. *Wear sunscreen whenever you are teaching outdoors.* Your safety is also important! Protect your skin, especially in the areas where the sun is most likely to reflect off of the water and onto your skin (i.e., under your chin and neck).

5. *Know the Emergency Action Plan for your facility, and what your role would be in the event of an aquatic emergency.* All aquatic professionals should have EAPs that detail who does what and when for emergency responses and train their staff accordingly. Each facility's EAP may be different, based on the facility's staff, equipment, and resources. Example emergency action plan topics include life-threatening emergencies (such as heart attack), non-life-threatening emergencies (such as bloody nose), severe weather, bodily fluid spill, lost child, crime, etc. Some formats to present EAPs are the Venn diagram model, simple flow charts, or step-by-step instructions. Anything is acceptable as long as it is clear, easy to understand, includes all steps, is located in a visible location, and, most importantly, is the template for what all employees are trained to do. Make sure that if your emergency action plans are going to include steps that by-standers or parents are responsible for, they are clearly defined and visible to the public. If necessary, distribute information to parents on the first day of lesson sessions.

6. *If you need to help a student who can't remain on the surface, keep flotation (rescue tube, noodle, lifejacket, etc.) between you and the distressed swimmer.* The flotation will allow you to help the student, while at the same time maintaining your own safety and security in the water. As you approach the student, position yourself so that you can give the flotation item to him or her, but avoid being grabbed by the student and pulled under the water. Stay with the student until he or she reaches the pool's edge or can touch the bottom. Remember to talk to the student while you are trying to help.

7. *Know the ability of your students and choose appropriate activities.* Understand your students' current limitations. When possible, teach in shallow water where your students can touch, until they are physically and mentally ready to swim in deep water. Be mindful of students' energy levels and remember to make them rest in between difficult activities.

8. *Enforce feet-first entry only unless you are teaching the five stages of diving, in which case water depth must be at least 6 feet.* Beginners should enter water head first only if the water

depth is at least twice that of body height. Explain the importance of the feet-first entry to your students so that they will become aware of their surroundings and understand when head-first entries are appropriate. Do not allow your students to run into the pool, jump backward, or perform flips or other activities that may cause injury after contact with the pool deck or pool bottom.

9. *Maintain control and discipline of your student group.* You are responsible for all of your students at all times. Do not depend on the lifeguards or other staff members to keep your students under control. Demand respect from your students. Remind students that when you are talking, they should be listening. Go over class rules the first day of lessons and set boundaries. Make sure that you and your students know what is going to happen when the rules have been broken.

Have Fun

Think back to your best experiences in school or another learning activity. What stands out? Probably those instances when you were so involved in an activity that you didn't even realize how much you were learning. Your best teachers allowed you to experience and self-discover new skills. Engage your students in activities that keep them moving and doing, rather than listening to you tell them about it. That makes learning fun!

Have a positive attitude before, during, and after class—enthusiasm and energy are contagious, and your students will pick up on your mood the minute they arrive. Be creative and use your imagination to stimulate and challenge your students.

Use different colors and shapes with your equipment and surroundings. There are many inexpensive mats to use on the pool deck or steps, as well as other toys that will sit on the bottom of the pool to make the water more intriguing and colorful.

Don't forget to smile and laugh out loud! You should be having just as much fun as your students.

Be Prepared

Lesson preparation, class management, and organization skills are necessary for you to be an effective instructor. In addition, organization and involvement keeps students attentive and minimizes discipline problems.

Pre-Lesson

- Know your instructor assignments, schedule, and number of students.
- Attend orientation and in-service training sessions.

First Day

- Fill out any roll sheets or paperwork for your students.
- Establish a consistent meeting area.
- Learn the names of your students.
- Introduce yourself.
- Establish rules and expectations.
- Assess students' skills.
- Present and explain student competency assessment and performance materials (i.e., personal record book or report card).
- Be safe and have fun!

Ongoing

- Remember students' names and say something kind to each as a greeting.
- Start class on time.

- Assess students' skills.
- Be firm and consistent in rule enforcement and discipline.
- Track progress and attendance.
- Remain organized and follow the Core Competencies Teaching Model specific to the course.
- Choose activities that are age- and skill-level appropriate.
- Present new skills through verbal cues, demonstration, and repetition.
- Prevent idle time and large amounts of transition time between skills.
- Maintain student competency assessment and performance materials.
- Identify performance areas of your teaching that need improvement.
- Be safe and have fun!

End of Session

- Perform final assessment.
- Review personal record book and set goals for the next session.
- Present award patches and participation certificates.
- Be safe and have fun!

Tips for Managing Discipline Challenges

Even with the best preparation and organization, your students will test boundaries, and you will encounter discipline challenges. Have a plan to help deal with some of the situations you can expect.

- When a child is not following directions, calmly state a planned consequence rather than react in a frustrated manner.
- Do not allow your class to become chaotic—"letting go" just once can cause this to occur.
- Follow through on disciplinary actions and stated consequences.
- Involve your supervisor to assist with repeat offenders.
- Don't allow discipline problems to distract your attention from other students and the goals of the lesson.
- Communicate with parents and caregivers.

Your students may exhibit inappropriate behavior for a number of reasons. Some of these reasons may not be within your control or even related to the swim lesson. However, in some instances you might be unintentionally creating the problem by your attitude, how you are conducting your lesson, or how you phrase your instructions. Understanding the possible cause can help you develop strategies to manage the situation. Table 2.1 provides information about the most common discipline problems swim instructors encounter.

Be Patient

Each student comes to you with different talents and abilities. Swimming skills can only be achieved when a student is developmentally ready—both physically and mentally. Your expertise and teaching skills can facilitate the process but cannot force it to happen. For

Table 2.1 Discipline Challenges

Type of behavior	Possible causes	Possible solutions
The wonder child	• Bored, class too slow-paced • Hyperactive • Instructor not keeping child involved	• Challenge the student. • Be firm about the class area and enforce rules. • Keep the class upbeat and interesting. • Give the child a job to do (i.e., hold a kick-board for you, etc.). • Keep up your scan—not only of your class but other classes and the guards. • Communicate the problem to your supervisor for ideas and suggestions to help or correct the problem.
The crier	• Environment (away from parent, too many people, noisy, cold, etc.) • Behavior escape (attention seeker) • Need to go the bathroom or not feeling well • Previous bad experience in the water or in swim lessons	• Keep calm, with friendly, warm actions. • Give the child personal space yet try to identify the underlying cause. • Make the class positive and fun with the other children, even if the crier only watches. • Put the child in a special place where they are a bit removed, distracted, yet still a part of the class (i.e., on your back, etc.). • Have a supervisor or aide assist with the child. Remember you have other children in the class.
No! child	• Asking "Do you want to do this?" or "Should we try this?" or "Are you ready?" • Demanding too much • Testing your will against theirs	• Don't give them a chance to say no. Tell them what to do. • Be in command without being scary or mean. • Play with the no ("I/we don't understand that word"). • Keep changing the activity and order of turns to baffle them and keep their interest. • Give extra praise.
Short attention span	• Too much verbalization by the instructor. Keep students active. • Too many demonstrations. • Not enough activities for each child.	• Change activities often. • Work with the students in pairs, not one at a time. • Provide practice activities for the student (within your reach and eyesight) while working with another student. • Keep interest up so they never know what is going to be next. • Keep attention on you rather than what is going on around you and your students. • Keep checking that you have attention. Ask your students to repeat what you say. • Over-plan the lesson so there is enough activity during the time span.

(continued)

Table 2.1 *(continued)*

Type of behavior	Possible causes	Possible solutions
ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) or hyperactivity	Inattentive, does not seem to listen, avoids concentrating, fidgets and wanders, noisy, easily distracted, talks a lot, impulsive (does things without thought to consequences), blurts out answers, interrupts, has a hard time waiting for turn, tends to engage in physically dangerous activity, attention-demanding behavior, difficulty in coordination, domineering, mood swings	• Seek advice/assistance from the parents. • Avoid too many distractions at one time. Decrease amount of distractions by having class in a more secluded area of the pool. • Keep students with ADD in the middle of the group and maintain eye contact as much as possible. • Keep a consistent schedule. Meet in the same place each time. Variety can distract. • Avoid yes/no questions unless you can accept a negative reply. • When you ask the child to stop something, add what they can do as a trade-off. • Establish clear limits and be consistent in enforcing these limits. • Respond to inappropriate behavior in a calm, unemotional, matter-of-fact manner. • Matter-of-factly demand higher expectations. • Do not say "I realize you can't help it." • Give one instruction at a time. • Ignore overreaction. • Give examples and demonstrations. • Be brief and specific. Break things into parts. • Boost the child's self-esteem. • Accentuate the positive.

example, a child learns to walk when he or she is ready, not before. Even if we sent every four-month-old baby to "walking school" with the best experts, not one would be taught to walk. A four-month-old baby simply lacks the necessary physical development to perform the skill. When the child is several months older, strength and coordination have improved to the point where walking develops naturally through experience, trial, and error. Swim skills develop in the same manner, and each student must be viewed as an individual on his or her own timeline for readiness.

If you do get frustrated or begin to lose your patience, take a deep breath, count to ten, or simply change to a different activity. Do what works for you, but remember not to let your parents or students see or hear your frustration.

Communicate Effectively

The ability to communicate effectively is extremely important. It will be necessary for you to communicate well at many different levels with many different people: your students, the parents or caregivers of your students, coworkers, and supervisors. What you say, how you say it, and even what you don't say can directly influence your ability to be an effective instructor.

With Students

- Every class, ask, "What's my name?" until familiarity is established.
- Be able to tell each student their name.
- Remember your manners and demand them from your students (i.e., say please and thank you).

- Use appropriate language. Be mindful of words that may not be allowed at home. Do not allow yourself or your students to speak inappropriately.
- Use positive reinforcement.
- Continually inform students of the rules, and consistently enforce rules.
- Avoid saying . . .

  "Do you want to . . . ?"

  "I won't let you drown."

  "Boy, this water is cold," etc.

With Parents or Caregivers

- Inform them often about their child's progress.
- Introduce yourself, and look people in the eye when speaking and listening.
- Give positive feedback.
- Ask questions if you have concerns about the child's behavior.
- Be confident, not cocky.
- Inform parents what your plans are for the class.
- Inform parents of class rules and policies.
- Think before you speak.
- It's OK to say "I don't know" if you are not sure about the answer to a question, but offer to find the answer and let them know.
- Follow up on the things you've said you will do.
- Avoid saying . . .

  "Your child will pass in _____ sessions."

  "I don't know why your child was passed into this class."

  "Your child is too hyper."

  Do not be critical of another instructor in any way.

  Do not criticize your facility, programs, or employees in any way.

  Do not promise a private lesson or refund.

  Do not share your personal opinion.
- Say positive things such as

  "Your child is so eager. He wants to get started before class begins, and I love his energy; however, one thing that might help his learning experience is to remind him of the class rules before bringing him to the pool."

With Coworkers

- Ask for help if you need it.
- Be courteous to each other.
- The public (parents, students, etc.) are watching and listening to all of you—keep your conversation related to your responsibilities as a swim instructor.
- Pay attention to how you interact and come across to others (i.e., vocabulary, language, body language).
- Treat others as you wish to be treated.
- If you are having a problem not related to the lesson at hand, don't let it show.
- Talk about problems only to those who can solve them—most often this is your supervisor, *not* your coworkers.
- Have fun! Enjoy each other's company.

With Supervisors

- Discuss problems with your supervisor. They may not know there is a problem unless you bring it to their attention. Give them the opportunity to solve the problem before it creates even bigger issues.
- Problems should be discussed in an office area, after class, out of the eyes and ears of the public.

Positive Reinforcement Words and Phrases

Good job!	Congratulations!	I like your energy!
Outstanding!	Wonderful!	I'm so proud of you!
Perfect!	Much better!	Yes!
You learn fast!	Nice job!	You're a good swimmer!
Spectacular!	Great!	You sure are fast!
Marvelous!	Keep working at it!	I like your energy!
Excellent!	I can tell you are trying hard!	Keep up the good work!
Terrific!	Awesome!	I'm so proud of you!
Very good!	You're getting better!	Your mom/dad/grandparent/kids will be so proud of you!
Super!	You did it!	
Way to go!	This is fun!	

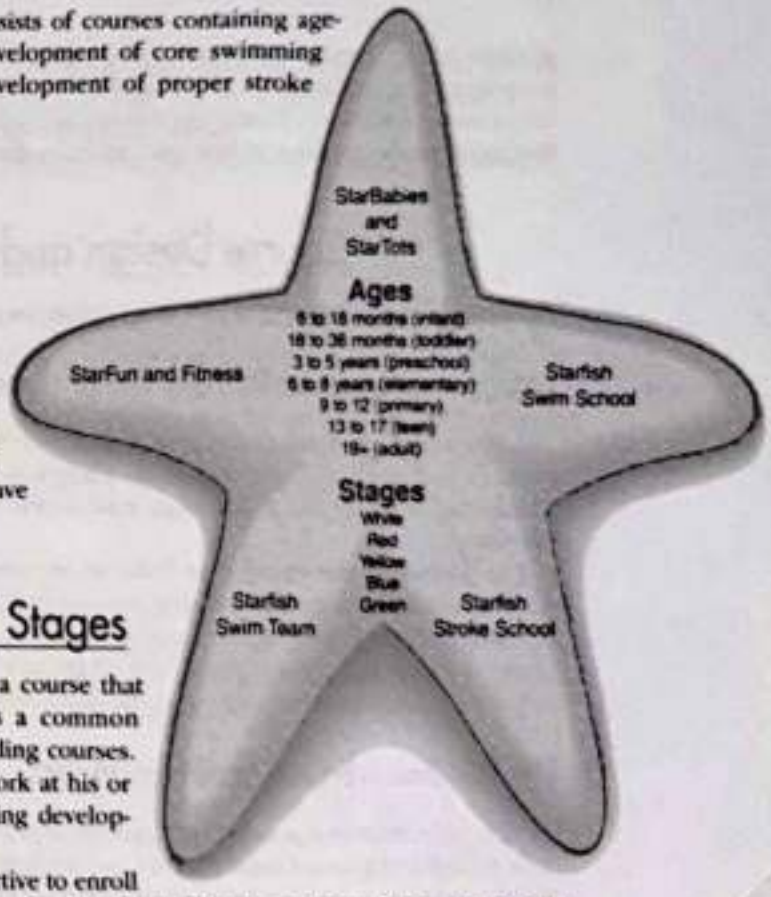
3

The Starfish Swimming Curriculum

The Starfish Swimming curriculum consists of courses containing age-appropriate activities that focus on development of core swimming competencies and, once achieved, development of proper stroke technique. The core courses include:

- StarBabies and StarTots
- Starfish Swim School
- Starfish Stroke School
- Starfish Swim Team
- StarFun and Fitness

This chapter describes the ages and stages of aquatic development for each course, and identifies how the curriculum can be adapted for students who have disabilities or special needs.



Curriculum Ages and Stages

It is important that students enroll in a course that is age appropriate. Table 3.1 shows a common breakdown of ages and the corresponding courses. Regardless of age, each student will work at his or her individual stage (level) of swimming development within a course.

Your training center may find it effective to enroll students in the StarBabies and StarTots, Starfish Swim School, and Starfish Stroke School courses divided by age groups. Students will usually be enrolled in the Starfish Swim Team and StarFun and Fitness program based on meeting skill prerequisites, regardless of age.

The ages identified for each course are recommendations, and each authorized training center has the authority to organize the method of enrolling students in courses in other ways and to determine which courses to offer. For example, some training centers have found it

Table 3.1 Curriculum Ages and Stages

	StarBabies and StarTots	Starfish Swim School	Starfish Stroke School	Starfish Swim Team	StarFun and Fitness	Angelfish
Infant (ages 6 to 18 months)	X					X
Toddler (ages 18 to 36 months)	X					X
Preschool (ages 3 to 5)		X	X			X
Elementary (ages 6 to 8)		X	X	X	X	X
Primary (ages 9 to 12)		X	X	X	X	X
Teen (ages 13 to 17)		X	X	X	X	X
Adult (ages 18 and older)		X	X	X		X

effective to separate the three-year-olds from the four- and five-year-olds or extend the primary age group to fifteen years. Additional names for the age groups or skill classifications may also be designated. That's why it is important for you to attend the orientation training that explains the specifics of how your training center operates.

Course Design and Descriptions

The courses available to be taught at a Starfish Swimming training center are as follows.

StarBabies and StarTots (Parent or Caregiver)

The StarBabies and StarTots Parent or Caregiver course is designed to be taught in sessions of either four or eight 45-minute lessons. Each class consists of 30 minutes of instruction and 15 minutes of family fun. A maximum ratio of one instructor to twelve parent–tot groups is permitted.

The purpose of this course is to foster in very young children a high comfort level in the water while at the same time training parents and caregivers in water safety and drowning prevention. This course does not teach children to become accomplished swimmers or to survive in the water; it does provide a confidence-building, fun, and loving experience. One parent or trusted caregiver must be in the water with each child. Swim diapers are required.

Starfish Swim School for Preschoolers

Starfish Swim School for preschoolers (ages three to five) is designed to be taught in sessions of eight 30-minute lessons. A maximum ratio of one instructor to six students is permitted. A ratio of one instructor to four students is recommended when working with three-year-olds.

Designed to meet the needs of preschoolers, this course will develop a high comfort level in the water and a readiness to swim, and for those children who are developmentally ready, it will teach beginning swim skills. This class approaches teaching swimming through creative, fun activities in the water. Students work toward developing the five core swimming competencies and receive color stage patches for each achievement. Children progress at their own pace in a small-group setting.

Starfish Swim School for Elementary and Primary School Ages

The Starfish Swim School course is for elementary school (ages six to eight) and primary school (ages nine to twelve). It is designed to be taught in sessions of eight 45-minute lessons. A maximum ratio of one instructor to six students is permitted.

Students work toward development of the five core swimming competencies and receive color stage patches for each achievement. The color stages are used to divide students into broad ability groups. Children progress at individual rates with the opportunity to learn the core swimming skills and progress to advanced strokes. Learning is self-paced but challenging.

Starfish Swim School for Teens and Adults

The Starfish Swim School course for teens (ages 13 to 17) and adults (ages 18 and older) is designed to be taught in sessions of eight 45-minute lessons. A maximum ratio of one instructor to six students is permitted.

This course is designed to improve comfort and skill in the water, regardless of past swimming experience. It is perfect for adults who desire to learn or improve strokes and water skills for fitness or fun. Students work toward developing the five basic core swimming competencies.

Starfish Stroke School

The Starfish Stroke School is designed to be taught in sessions of eight 45-minute lessons. The course is for students of all ages that have achieved the Green stage benchmarks. A maximum ratio of one instructor to six students is permitted.

Students refine freestyle and learn stroke technique for backstroke, butterfly, breaststroke, and more!

Starfish Swim Team

Starfish Swim Team can be presented in eight 45-minute to one-hour sessions, or it can be presented as an ongoing or seasonal program. A maximum ratio of one instructor to twenty students is recommended.

Students learn and refine the competitive strokes plus develop an understanding of basic training principles such as using a pace clock, starts and turns, and racing. This program is a great introduction to competitive swimming in a low-key environment.

StarFun and Fitness

StarFun and Fitness provides activities for children in a group setting such as home school, school field trips, after-school programs, birthday parties, and scout troops. The StarFun and Fitness activities introduce children to lifetime aquatic skills. Your training center may offer some or all of the following StarFun and Fitness programs.

StarFun and Fitness for Home School and After School This program is designed to be taught in eight one-hour sessions. Students ages six and older may participate. A maximum ratio of one instructor to twelve students is permitted. A maximum ratio of one instructor to six students is recommended when working with primarily beginner-level swimmers.

Each week, students are introduced to various activities that occur in and around water: water safety, swim skill development, fitness swimming, water exercise, pool games, introduction to triathlon, introduction to snorkeling, skin diving and scuba diving, and introduction to kayaking. Parents or caregivers do not need to be present.

StarFun and Fitness Field Trips This program is designed to be taught in one 2-and-a-half-hour session. Instructor-to-student ratios will depend on class size and ability level. A

maximum ratio of one instructor to six beginner swimmers is recommended. Teachers may assist StarFun & Fitness instructors.

Students are divided into groups and rotate through activities including 40 minutes of water safety, 40 minutes of swim skill development, 10 minutes of lifeguard rescue demonstrations, 40 minutes of snorkeling, kayaking, or pool games (ability dependent), 15 minutes of free swim, and 5 minutes of overview of the day. Teachers must be present with the students at all times.

StarFun and Fitness Holidays or Parties This program is designed to be taught in one 3-hour session. Children ages six and older may participate. The activities are themed for the holiday or party. A maximum ratio of one instructor to twelve students is permitted.

Students are divided into groups and rotate through activities including a 10-minute facility tour and overview of rules; 30 minutes of water safety; 30 minutes of swim skill development; a 45-minute snack/video break; 45 minutes of snorkeling, kayaking, or pool games (ability dependent); followed by 15 minutes of recreational swim and 5 minutes of overview of the day. Parents or caregivers do not need to be present.

StarFun and Fitness Camp This program is designed to be taught in four 2-and-a-half-hour sessions. Children ages six and older may participate. A maximum ratio of one instructor to twelve students is permitted. A maximum ratio of one instructor to six beginner students is recommended.

Students participate in various activities such as water safety, swim skill development, fitness swimming, water exercise, pool games, introduction to triathlon, introduction to snorkeling, skin diving and scuba diving, and introduction to kayaking. Parents or caregivers do not need to be present.

StarFun and Fitness for Scouts This program is designed to be taught in one 8-hour session in order to possibly accommodate an entire scout council in one day. Sessions may be divided up if working with individual troops. Scouts ages six and older may participate. Instructor-to-scout ratios depend on troop size and ability level. Troop leaders and older scouts may assist StarFun and Fitness instructors. A maximum ratio of one instructor to twelve scouts is permitted.

Scouts participate in various activities such as water safety, swim skill development, fitness swimming, water exercise, pool games, introduction to triathlon, introduction to snorkeling, skin diving and scuba diving, and introduction to kayaking. Parents or caregivers do not need to be present.

AngelFish

Starfish Aquatics Institute also offers the AngelFish program. This program is designed to provide comprehensive swim instruction for students who have special needs. All classes are conducted using the Starfish Swimming Core Competencies Teaching Models (StarBabies and StarTots, Starfish Swim School, Starfish Stroke School, Starfish Swim Team, and StarFun and Fitness). Classes provide necessary teaching adaptations and adaptive equipment that may be required to make the students as independent and successful in the water as possible.

Classes are designed to be taught in sessions of eight 30- to 45-minute lessons, or presented as an ongoing seasonal program. Instructor-to-student ratios will depend upon the needs and ability levels of the students. A maximum ratio of one instructor to four students is permitted.

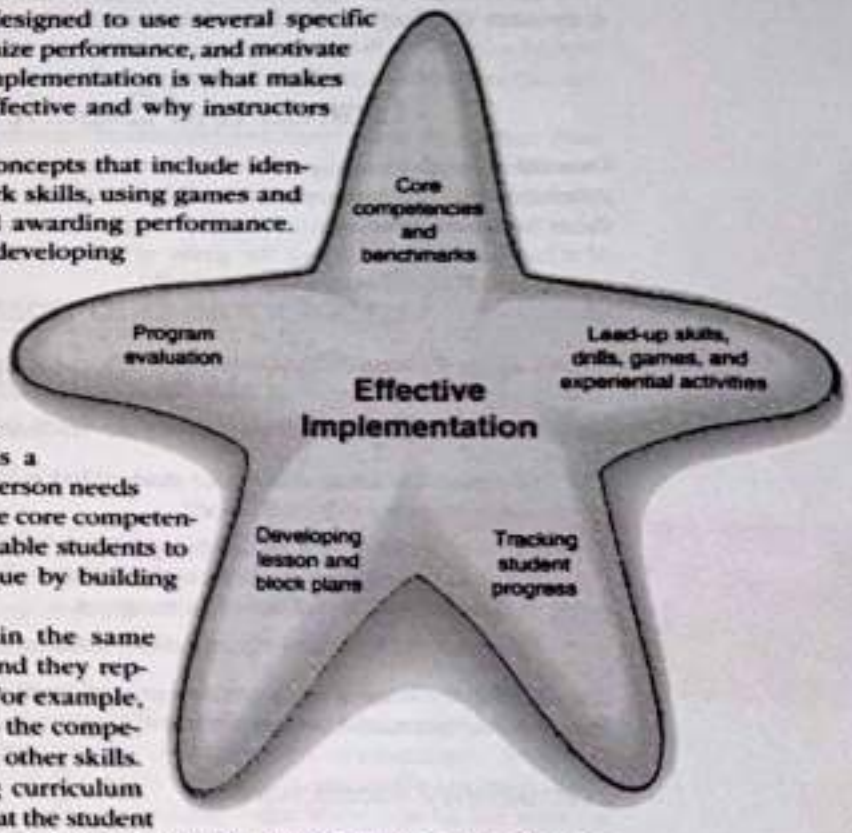
All Starfish Swim Instructors must complete the online Introduction to Adapted Aquatics Instruction course to be authorized to teach AngelFish classes.

4

Effective Implementation

The Starfish Swimming curriculum is designed to use several specific methods of organization, track and recognize performance, and motivate students. This unique combination of implementation is what makes the Starfish Swimming curriculum so effective and why instructors are focused and students learn quickly.

This chapter explains these unique concepts that include identifying core competencies and benchmark skills, using games and experiential activities, and tracking and awarding performance. The chapter wraps up with methods for developing lesson plans.



Core Competencies

The Starfish Swimming curriculum is built around the concept that there is a shared core of aquatic skills that every person needs to know to be proficient in the water. The core competencies provide the foundation that will enable students to learn correct swimming stroke technique by building upon what they already know.

The five core competencies remain the same regardless of the age of the student, and they represent the stage of skill development. For example, a student of any age must first develop the competency of trust before being able to learn other skills. Each course in the Starfish Swimming curriculum has five identified core competencies that the student should work toward mastering. The core competencies are identified by a color for ease in tracking the stage in which the student is working.

Benchmarks

A benchmark is a specific skill that, when performed, demonstrates that the student has achieved the core competency. For example, if the core competency is integrated movement in preparation for learning freestyle, the benchmark would be "Start in side glide, swim freestyle 30 feet with 1-2-3 breathe pattern."

When the student performs the benchmark skill, he or she has achieved the corresponding competency and earns a color patch. This competency and benchmark approach is similar to achieving belts in martial arts.

By having just a few benchmarks to achieve, both the instructor and student can be focused on earning that achievement. This focus helps instructors teach appropriate lead-up skills and choose games and activities that will help achieve the goal. The outcome is focused teaching that gets results.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

A lead-up skill is something that helps a student prepare to learn a more advanced skill, or it is a part of a skill. For example, kicking by itself is not swimming, but once it is performed efficiently, the swimming stroke is much easier to learn. Lead-up skill examples that help develop performance toward the benchmark are provided in chapters 5 through 7. There are many, many more that you may find effective throughout your teaching career. Use the New Ideas Log in the appendix to write down these skills and drills so you will always have a resource of effective tools to use while teaching your students.

Games and Experiential Activities

One effective way to help students learn the lead-up skills is to use games and experiential activities. This teaching approach allows the learner to experience the movements you want them to master by playing the game or participating in the activity. Your role becomes one of a facilitator (by running the game or activity) and evaluator (by watching the student's performance and then giving feedback).

Tracking Student Progress

Knowing the stage of development of your students is very important for several reasons:

- You need to know what your student has achieved so you can map out a plan of what competencies still need work.
- If your student is a child, the parent or caregiver has made an investment, usually in money and time, to entrust the child to you. Results are expected, and the parent wants to be kept informed of progress.
- The student becomes motivated by achievement and likes to see progress.

The Starfish Swimming program has several items that can be used to assess competency, track performance, and award student achievement.

Competency Assessment

Each training center is responsible for providing students with Competency Assessment and Performance (CAP) materials. These materials should be used to document, communicate, and award progress throughout the program. The Starfish Swimming CAP materials available for purchase include the Personal Record (PR) books, water-resistant report cards, patches, and participation certificates.

A personal record (PR) book or water-resistant report card may be issued to each student to help you track performance and plan your lessons. This CAP material also provides valuable information for the parent regarding the progress of their child.

During the first lesson with children, have the parent or caregiver read through the CAP material to become familiar with the core competencies and benchmarks. This will allow the

parent to develop an understanding of the curriculum and progression through the program. After each lesson, gather your students together and award stickers for the lead-up skills accomplished. Have the students then share their rewards with their parents. Using the CAP material this way will allow the parents to receive daily reports of their child's progress. This will also open the door for communication between the instructor and the parent. This process should take no more than 5 to 10 minutes.

If time constraints are a concern, consider issuing the CAP material to the parents and have them track progression through the skills. You could also fill out the CAP materials on your own time and send them home with the students weekly. There are many ways to use the CAP materials in the program. Figure out what works best for you and your program. Regardless, you must communicate a student's progression through the program to the parent. Parents need to know what their child has learned and what their child still needs to learn. This type of communication will result in more student renewals within your program.

Award Patches and Participation Certificates

After a student completes a benchmark, patches may be issued for the color stage completed. Patches may be issued upon completion of the benchmark, resulting in possibly receiving multiple patches within a lesson session, or patches may be issued at the end of a lesson session (maybe only one for the highest stage achieved). Students will also receive certificates for participation in a lesson session.

There are many other creative ways to reward students throughout a lesson session. Free swim time, trips to the treasure chest, and coupons are just some ideas. Positive reinforcement is the most important reward of all. Make sure that students are rewarded regularly for skills achieved.

Developing Lesson and Block Plans

The objective of your teaching is to have your students achieve the benchmark skills. However, to achieve this goal you must present your students with activities that will develop a series of skills that lead to the desired end result.

During Class

- Concentrate on lead-up skills.
- A skill should be solid (i.e., the student can repeat the skill correctly and consistently) before awarding a completion sticker on the report card.
- Continually reemphasize the lead-up skills.
- Focus on the goal of being able to perform the core benchmark skills.

Even though the curriculum is divided into five sequential performance stages, *the build-up skills presented in each stage are not sequential.* What this means is that students will not necessarily learn a skill in the order it is listed on the core competencies summary chart. For example, some students may learn skills on the back before they are proficient with skills on the front. Work toward the benchmark skill by providing experience with all the lead-up skills and award achievement as skills are mastered.

Students may also work in two stages at the same time. For example, the benchmark skill may have been achieved and the student has been awarded a stage patch. However, there may be one or two lead-up skills on the core competencies summary chart that are still in development. Remember that the stage patch is awarded for the benchmark skill, not for completing all of the lead-up skills.

There is a summary chart at the end of each course chapter that includes the focus, lead-up skills, safety skill benchmark, and swim skill benchmark for each color stage. You may want to laminate the chart and keep it poolside until you have developed an understanding of the program. The specific drills and activities you will include in your lesson plan should

lead toward the achievement of the benchmark and also be appropriate for the age of your students. There are also charts that have games and experiential activities, as well as sample lesson plans that demonstrate the progression from one stage to another.

Due to scheduling conflicts or low enrollments, at some point you may have to teach a class that contains students of multiple ability stages. You should not find that very difficult to do with this program. Every student can always use some review time with previously learned skills. Regardless, try adapting a certain skill to meet the needs of all students involved. For instance, you have some swimmers who are still trying to submerge, others to float, and even more that are working on streamline kicks. Challenge your beginner students to make alligator arms, blow some bubbles with a few hungry "chop, chop, chop" sounds, and kick their feet. Intermediate students can work on assisted streamline pull with a few moments of pause to float. More advanced students can push off the wall and streamline kick to you. Overall, every student is essentially working on streamline, but you have adapted it to meet their stage of ability.

Program Evaluation

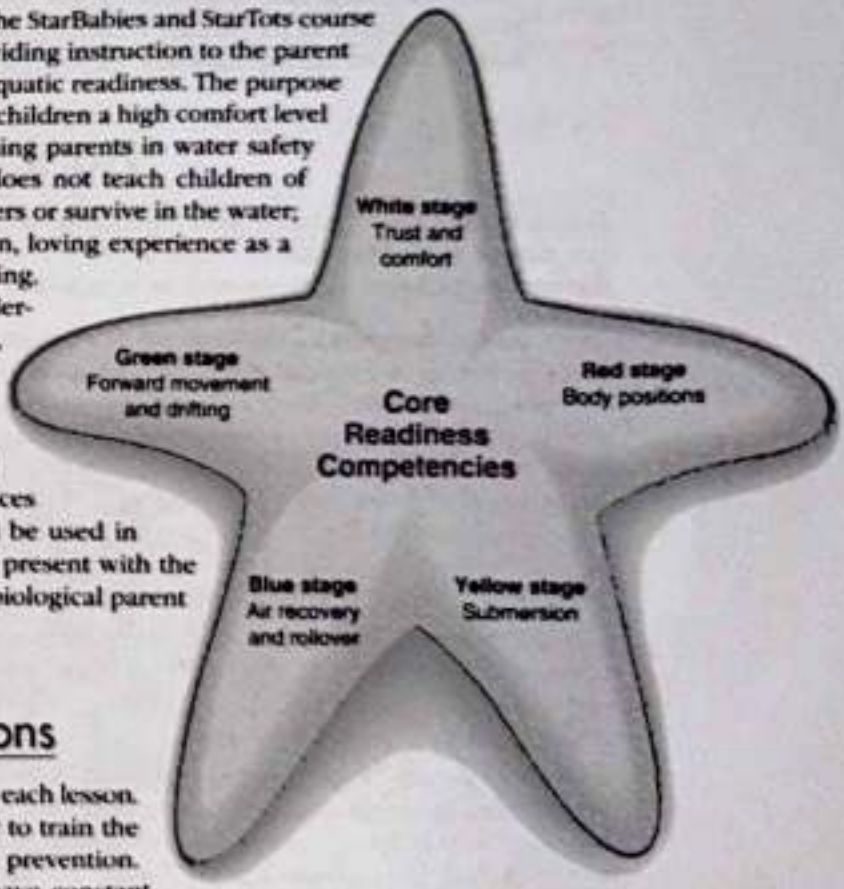
Evaluation of the program is also an important part of effective implementation. You've already learned that your performance will be rated by the parents of your students who are children. The overall experience with the Starfish Swimming program will be rated at the end of each session using the Satisfaction Monitor. This evaluation requirement is a critical component of the Starfish Swimming curriculum and results are taken very seriously.

5

StarBabies and StarTots Core Competencies Teaching Model

For children under the age of three years, the StarBabies and StarTots course introduces the core competencies by providing instruction to the parent or caregiver about how to help develop aquatic readiness. The purpose of this course is to develop in very young children a high comfort level in the water while at the same time training parents in water safety and drowning prevention. This course does not teach children of this age to become accomplished swimmers or survive in the water; it does provide a confidence-building, fun, loving experience as a foundation for a lifetime of aquatic learning.

This chapter describes safety considerations for working with infants, toddlers, and parents; identifies the benchmarks for the five stages of the StarBabies and StarTots course; and provides suggested lead-up skills and activities to help you create fun and effective learning experiences for your students. The term *parent* will be used in this chapter to identify the adult who is present with the child, whether or not that person is the biological parent or a trusted caregiver.



Safety Considerations

Water safety should be incorporated into each lesson. Remember that this is your opportunity to train the parents in water safety and drowning prevention. This is the one class where you will have constant face-to-face interaction with the parents. Take advantage of this time to increase the parents' awareness of good water safety habits. The following water safety concepts should be addressed at the first lesson and are the responsibility of the parent or caregiver:

- One parent or trusted caregiver must be in the water with each child.
- The child must be within sight and within reach at all times.
- Walk carefully on slippery steps and wet concrete, especially when carrying a child.
- Use the steps when entering the pool while carrying an infant. If steps are not available, demonstrate how to safely enter the pool with a child.
- Do not let the children drink the pool water. Drinking the pool water can lead to upset stomachs and accidents in the pool. Consider implementing a "three strikes and you're out" rule: If a child swallows water more than three times in a lesson, then it is time to exit the pool.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia such as chattering teeth, shaking, and blue lips, and exit the pool if the child is too cold. Have warm towels ready near poolside.
- Parents and children should enter the water at the designated class location and only after getting permission from the instructor.
- Children who are not toilet trained must wear swim diapers. Those who are toilet trained should use the toilet before entering the pool.
- Regardless of the activity, position yourself so that you can see your students at all time. Never turn your back to students that may be on the wall.
- Reinforce the messages of the water safety rhymes in each lesson to help your students develop safe habits.
- Organize drills so that parents and caregivers all move in one direction to avoid running into each other.
- Wear your rescue tube (strap) when you are teaching. The rescue tube identifies you as an instructor, is an excellent teaching aid, and provides flotation if you need to assist a student having difficulty without having to make body contact.

Practice

Most parents want to practice with their child outside of lessons but don't know how. Practice time is really play time. It is important for you as the instructor to communicate with the parents and give guidance on how to practice.

- Assign homework. The bathtub is an excellent place to practice trust and comfort skills, as well as body positioning and even submersion. Train the parents to use the bathtub as a place to overcome fears and establish good habits. Assign homework such as practicing backfloats, kicks, and blowing bubbles in the bathtub. Many children do not like water in their face. If parents are taught to pour water over their child's head during every bath, beginning soon after birth, children will be less likely to develop the fear and discontent associated with washing the hair and face. Showering is also an excellent way to develop comfort with water in and on the eyes and face. Be sure to stress the importance of constant supervision when children are in the bath or shower.

- If possible, work out a time when parents can come back to the pool where the lessons are being held for quality family fun time. Instruct parents not to criticize or pressure, but to give their child the opportunity to review skills learned during swim lessons. Practice time should be fun and interactive.

- Parents need to understand that the skills taught during the StarBabies course should be practiced over and over again until a child is at least three years old and ready for group lessons. Good skills will not develop overnight. Consistency with skill practice is imperative for a child to remember lessons learned and for progression to occur during each swim session.

White Stage: Trust and Comfort

Comfort in the water comes from trust, experience, and loving encouragement. It is important for children to become comfortable in the water to create excitement and willingness to learn and participate. Children can begin to become comfortable in the water as early as six months of age. The earlier the process begins, the more accepting a child will become to the water. Some parents and children will take longer to develop a high trust and comfort level in the water than others. Be patient and continue to introduce the activities in each of the StarBabies and StarTots stages so that the parent will have the knowledge of what to do when the child is ready. Within each lesson the parent must be given the option to choose to participate in the activities she or he is comfortable performing with the child.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Understand constant and dedicated surveillance.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Parent and child are relaxed and confident, and enjoy being in the water together.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Drowning Prevention Discuss the importance of keeping children within sight and within reach anytime there is water nearby, and remind parents that drowning is the leading cause of accidental death in children under the age of four years—even higher than automobile accidents. Identify the need to designate a specific "child watcher" when groups of adults are together with children at parties or outings.

Entry Walking into and out of the pool using wide steps or a zero-depth entry is the safest method when carrying a child. When these methods are not available, demonstrate the following method (see figure 5.1):

- The parent and child both sit on the pool edge, with the parent holding the child in a seated position next to her.
- The parent crosses one arm in front of the child's chest and holds onto the edge of the pool, bracing the child from falling into the water while using her other hand to hold the child in place.
- The parent slides into the pool.
- Once in the pool, the parent lifts the child off the wall and into the water.

Figure 5.1 Parent holds child in a seated position to enter the water from the pool edge (a); parent slides into the pool, keeping child in seated position (b); parent enters water and takes child into her arms (c).

Water Play Children learn through play, and the water provides endless opportunities for creative fun. Use buckets, sponges, floats, cups, or other water toys to encourage independent play so that the children will become comfortable in the water and used to water being splashed or poured over the head and face.

Songs Songs provide a familiar routine for children and help parents feel involved in the lesson activities. Select and integrate at least two songs into every lesson. Use parents to lead the songs if you are not familiar with some of the melodies or words, and encourage new and creative adaptations.

Balance Holds Remind parents that their role is to lightly hold and balance their child in the water so that the child can experience buoyancy. If a parent is holding the child too close or too tight, the child will never learn the feeling of floating or the natural way water will hold up their body, and comfort in the water will take longer to develop.

Red Stage: Body Positions

Teach the parents proper ways of holding their child in the water that will reinforce proper body positioning in the future.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Fit and properly put a lifejacket on the child.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Perform a relaxed front, back, vertical, and side position for at least 5 seconds each.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Lifejackets Identify the types of lifejackets and flotation suits available for infants or children. Encourage parents to bring the child's personal lifejacket or flotation suit to class.

Floating

- *Front Floats.* The parent holds the child under the armpits, or chest, and should allow the child's legs to float up naturally. It is important for the parent and child to be face to face and maintain eye contact until the child is comfortable (see figure 5.2a). The parent must be submerged to shoulder level to be in the best position for holding and to develop trust. After the child has become comfortable with the position, the parent may switch to a position in which the child focuses on reaching for an object, such as a floating boat or duck (see figure 5.2b).

Figure 5.2 Parent holds child in a front float position, maintaining eye contact (a); parent holds child in a front float hold position to reach for an object (b).

Figure 5.3 Parent holds child in a back float position with their cheeks touching (a); parent holds child in a back float position with child's head resting on the parent's chest (b); parent holds child in a back float with her arms stretched out and the child's ears in the water (c).

- *Back Floats.* The parent holds the child so that he or she is looking up at the sky. Parent and child should be cheek to cheek (see figure 5.3a). After the child becomes comfortable with this position, the parent has the child lay back so that the child's head is relaxing on the parent's chest (see figure 5.3b). Once the child is completely comfortable, the parent may hold the child away from their body, although still maintaining eye contact. It is important for the child to become comfortable placing his ears into the water (see figure 5.3c). The parent should not advance to the next position until they have accomplished doing so. The child is going to squirm if he is not comfortable, so it is important for the parent to remain calm and relaxed. If the child does begin to squirm, instruct the parent to wrap their arms around the child, making the child feel as secure as possible.

Counting Cues Counting helps train children from the very beginning to wait until their parents are ready before jumping into the pool. The counting routine also verbally cues the child that an action is about to take place. This cue helps prepare the child to get ready to perform a skill. This preparation will be especially important when the child is ready to go underwater. Encourage and reinforce the habit of always saying "Ready, 1, 2, 3" before sliding or jumping into the water.

Sliding and Jumping Have the child sit on the edge of the pool. The parent counts to three and then has the child slide into their arms and into the pool. The parent should hold the child under the arms for support. You want to see the child falling into the pool, not the parent picking up the child and placing him into the water. Discourage the parents from holding hands with their child because children become attached to this activity and hand-holding can become difficult to eliminate when trying to develop independent movement. Also discourage parents from pulling children in the water by their hands or arms because of the strain it puts on the joints.

Again, reinforce good habits by insisting that the parents hold the child under the arms for support and not by the hands or arms.

Immediately after the child slides or jumps into the pool, the parent should ask, "Where is the wall?" and turn the child back toward the wall. This action will train the child over time to always look for the wall if they ever fall into the pool.

Climbing Out Help the child to climb out of the pool using verbal cues such as "Hands, elbows, knees" (see figure 5.4). Even infants should be taken through this motion; just be careful not to let her hit her chin. Parents need to teach their children how to get out of the pool, in the event that they ever do fall in.

Figure 5.4 Child uses her hands, elbows, and knees to climb out of the pool.

Yellow Stage: Submersion

Safety Skill Benchmark

Use flotation to help someone in the water (Reach or throw . . . don't go) and know how to call 911. If parents with infants are unable to perform, demonstrate the skills and stress the dangers of the water.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Enter from the wall, submerge, turn around, grab on to the wall, and pull up (assisted).

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Reach and Throw Inform parents about the importance of using flotation to help someone in the water (Reach or throw . . . don't go). Demonstrate effective methods for assisting distressed swimmers by reaching with a pool noodle, towel, pole, branch, or lifeguard tube and by throwing a lifejacket, kickboard, or ring buoy.

Vertical Submerge It is important to teach parents to count to ready their child to go underwater. The steps to prepare a parent to perform a vertical submerge are:

- Start in a face-to-face position holding the child lightly around the body.
- Say, "Ready, 1, 2, 3."
- On 3, the parent quickly blows toward the child's nose and mouth. This will cause the child, especially infants, to take in a breath.
- While blowing, quickly lower the child under the water so he or she is completely submerged for about two or three seconds.
- Gently and slowly lift the child into your arms and give lots of praise.

Watch for signs that the child is swallowing water while submerged. If the child coughs or chokes after submersion, wait a few minutes before trying again. Sometimes water can be inhaled through the nose, which can cause the child to blink his eyes, scratch his nose, or sneeze. Until a child has consistent breath control, limit submersions to three per lesson.

Horizontal Submerge A horizontal submerge places the child in more of a "swimming" body position. Some children prefer this method when first learning submersion skills. Instruct parents to:

- Hold the child in a front float position with their arms stretched out and their hands on the child's chest and their thumbs in the child's armpits and around the shoulder.
- Walk backward to create a current.
- Facing the child, say, "Ready, 1, 2, 3."
- On 3, the parent quickly blows toward the child's nose and mouth. This will cause the child, especially infants, to take in a breath.
- Scoop the child underwater, pause for a second or two, and then gently lift the child up back to the front float position. As the child comes up, parent and child should be facing each other (see figure 5.5).
- Give lots of hugs and praise.

Figure 5.5 Parent holds child in a front float position with her arms stretched out and her hands on the child's chest, cues the child, and blows in the child's face (a); parent walks backward and scoops the child underwater (b); parent brings child to the surface and gives lots of praise (c).

Blue Stage: Air Recovery and Rollover

Safety Skill Benchmark

Preventing recreational water illness.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Submerge off wall, come to surface unassisted, and get a breath in vertical or horizontal (on back) position.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Recreational Water Illness Discuss with parents the procedures for preventing fecal contamination of the pool. Pass out the Center for Disease Control "Pleas" flyer.

Roll Front to Back Rolling over is an important skill so that a child can recover for air, especially after an accidental fall into the pool. Rolling over also begins to develop body rotation which is a foundation for learning more advanced swimming skills.

To roll a child from the front to the back, instruct the parent to:

- Start in front position, face to face.
- Say, "Ready, 1, 2, 3, roll."
- Push down on one shoulder while lifting up on the other.
- As the child begins to roll, provide light support under the upper shoulders or on the back of the head to balance the child in a back float position.

Roll Back to Front To roll a child from the back to the front, instruct the parent to:

- Start in a back float position with the child's body perpendicular to the parent.
- Say, "Ready, 1, 2, 3, roll."
- Push down on one shoulder while lifting up on the other.
- As the child begins to roll, provide light support under the upper chest to balance the child in the front position

Bobbing Bobbing is performed in a vertical position. The parent faces the child and holds her around the body. The child submerges just under the water surface, and then rises above the surface just enough to get a breath of air before submerging again (see figure 5.6). Bobbing should be rhythmic and smooth, with verbal cues given to the child before each submersion. There isn't time to perform the "Ready, 1, 2, 3" count in between each bob, so a word such as "again" when the child rises to the surface will be more effective. As the child develops the ability to kick and pull, the parent will have to assist less, and eventually the child will be able to bob independently.

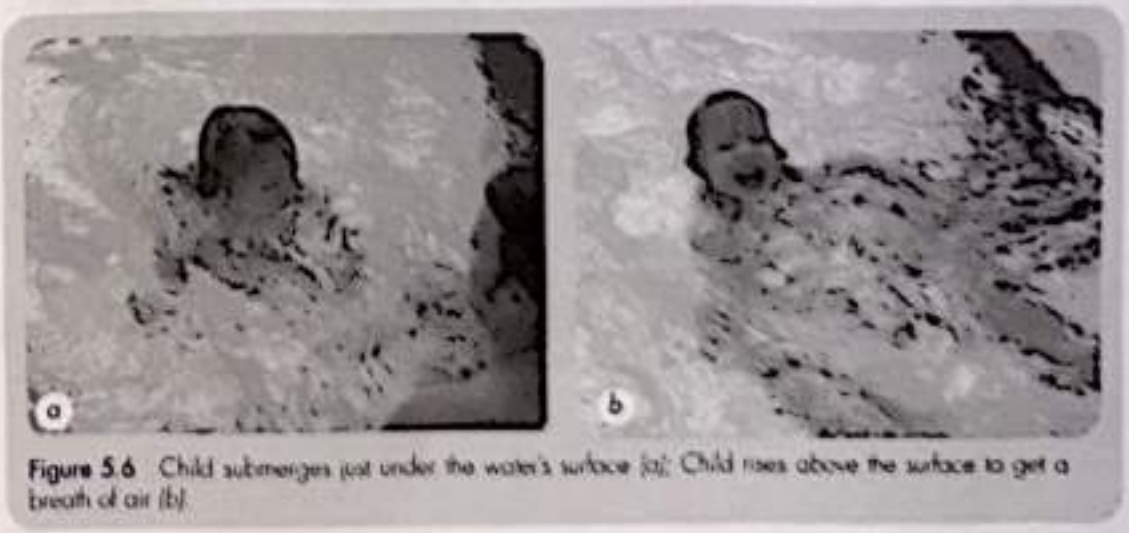


Figure 5.6 Child submerges just under the water's surface (a); Child rises above the surface to get a breath of air (b).

Green Stage: Forward Movement

Safety Skill Benchmark
Know about infant and child CPR.

Swim Skill Benchmark
Move through the water independently 10 feet, with or without flotation.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Introduction to CPR Inform parents about the importance of learning CPR and knowing how to respond in an emergency. When feasible, demonstrate or show a CPR video and have the parents practice on a manikin or doll. The Family and Friends CPR Anytime Kit, which comes with a personal manikin and instructional DVD, is an excellent resource to provide to your class.

Kicking Have the parent face the child, placing his hands under the child's armpits. Use verbal cues such as "Big kicks, big splashes, move those feet" to motivate the child to move his legs and feet. The parent may need to rest the child's chin on his shoulder, slide his arms under the child, and enact leg movement (see figures 5.7 and 5.8). Make sure the parent moves around only when the child is kicking his feet, to teach the child which actions will result in movement. Parents should practice kicking on the front and on the back. For infants, parents will need to slide their arms underneath the child's legs and enact movement. Older children should be kicking their legs without help. Tickle their feet if necessary to encourage movement.

Figure 5.7 Parent rests child on her shoulder to assist with front kicking techniques.

Figure 5.8 Parent rests child on her shoulder to assist with back kicking techniques.

Pulling For infants, parents can place each of their index fingers into the child's hands and enact movement (see figure 5.9). Older children can enact arm movements on their own. Toddlers enjoy acting like monkeys and pretending like they are swinging from tree to tree. The parent then holds the child underneath her arms to allow the child to use her arms while on her front and enact swimming. If a child has more than one caretaker with him, have them pass the child back and forth (see figure 5.10). Allow the child to reach and pull and kick his feet.

Figure 5.9 Parent holds child's hands and enacts movement.

Figure 5.10 Parents pass child back and forth.

Drifting Once the child is comfortable going underwater, have the parent try drifting. The parent is going to hold the child under the arms and walk backward, creating a wake in the water (see figure 5.11*a*). The parent will let the child go in the wake so that child continues to "drift" toward the parent (see figure 5.11*b*). The parent should then quickly scoop the child up, using lots of positive reinforcement (see figure 5.11*c*).

As the child progresses, the parent should combine a few drifts together so that the parent has the child submerging, coming up for air, submerging, coming up for air, and so on. This should develop a habit of the child coming to the surface for air when needed.

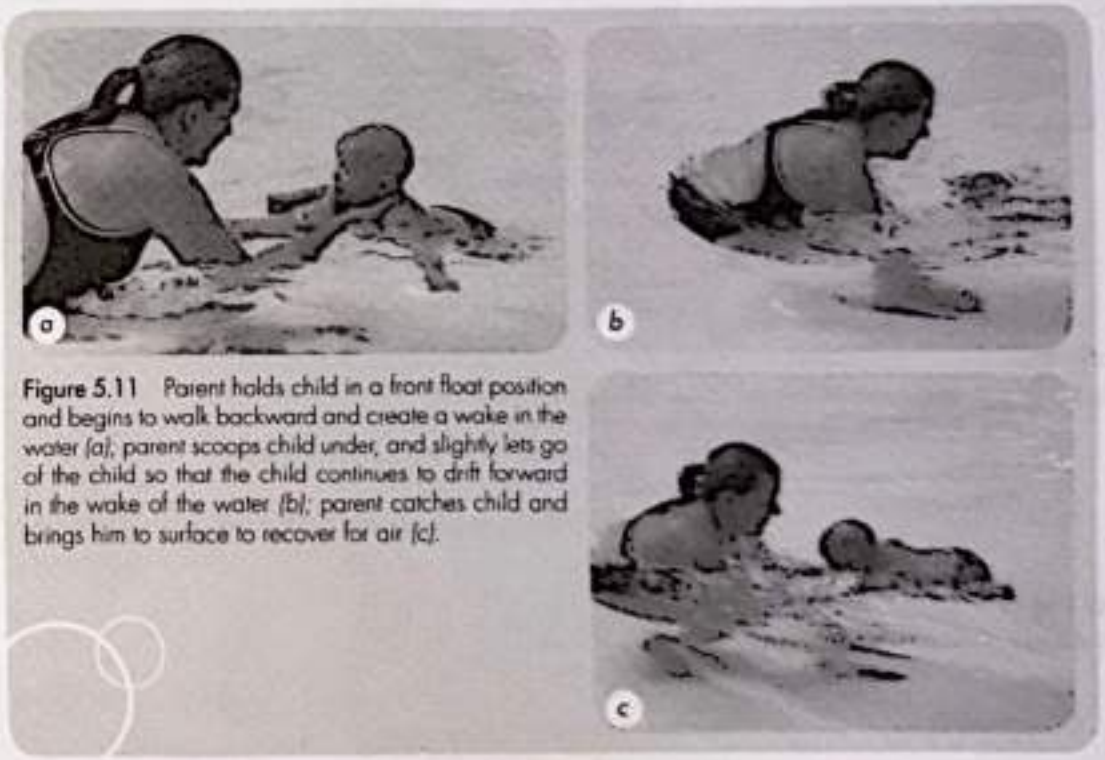


Figure 5.11 Parent holds child in a front float position and begins to walk backward and create a wake in the water (*a*); parent scoops child under, and slightly lets go of the child so that the child continues to drift forward in the wake of the water (*b*); parent catches child and brings him to surface to recover for air (*c*).

Independent Movement Parents should continue to encourage their child to move independently, with and without flotation. Incorporate activities together, such as jumping, rolling over, and drifting, so that the child learns the importance of combining skills to create forward movement and recover for air.

Table 5.1 StarBabies and StarTots Games and Experiential Activities

Name and objective	Suggested stage	Teaching points
Look Who's Coming Comfort, trust, fun	White and any	Sing: Look who's coming to the pool today, pool today, pool today Look who's coming to the pool today, what's your name? (Child's name) is coming to the pool today, pool today, pool today (Child's name) is coming to the pool today, and what's your name? *(Repeat until you have said every child's name and then end with "let's have fun" instead of "what's your name.")*
Bubbles Readiness	White and any	Bubbles (Practice first with a wand and then in the water): • Children 18 to 36 months should try to blow bubbles on the first day. • Children 6 to 18 months should watch parents blow bubbles on the first day. (Parents should dip the child's chin in the water and face to face attempt to blow bubbles at future lessons.) Sing: Ring around the rosies Pockets full of posies Ashes, splashes, *We all blow bubbles* Ring around the ocean A pocket full of seashells Splashes, splashes, *We all blow bubbles*
I Love You Readiness	White and any	Sing: I love you, you love me We're a happy family With a great big hug and a kiss from you to me Won't you say you love me too? *(Parents and children give each other big hugs and kisses and then kiss the water.)*
Coo Coo Readiness	White and any	Sing: Tick Tock, Tick Tock The clock is striking one o'clock Coo Coo Tick Tock, Tick Tock The clock is striking two o'clock Coo Coo, Coo Coo Tick Tock, Tick Tock The clock is striking three o'clock Coo Coo, Coo Coo, Coo Coo *(Parent sways back and forth and picks child up in the air on the Coo Coos.)*

Name and objective	Suggested stage	Teaching points
When You're Up You're Up* Readiness	White and any	Sing: The grand ole Duke of York He had ten thousand men He marched them up the hill And then he marched them down again And when you're up you're up And when you're down you're down And when you're only half way up You're neither up nor down *(Every time you say up, lift the child up.)*
The Wheels on the Bus* Readiness	Any	Sing: The wheels on the bus go round and round, round and round, round and round The wheels on the bus go round and round, all through the town *(arm movement)* The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish, swish, swish, swish, swish, swish, swish The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish, all through the town *(kick feet)* The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep, all through the town *(make splashes)* The children on the bus go up and down, up and down, up and down The children on the bus go up and down, all through the town *(parent lifts child into the air)* The kids on the bus say yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah The kids on the bus say yeah, yeah, yeah, all through the town *(clap hands)*
If You're Happy, Splash!* Trust building, independent movement, direction change, balance	Any	Sing: If you're happy and you know it *splash your hands* If you're happy and you know it *splash your hands* If you're happy and you know it then your face will always show it If you're happy and you know it *splash your hands* If you're happy and you know it *splash your feet* If you're happy and you know it *blow some bubbles* . . .
Obstacle Course* Independent movement, direction change, movement with a child	Any	Position rescue tubes, other equipment, and activities in a sequence. Have parents complete the course with the child individually or as a team.
Belly Boat* Back float and back position	Green	Sing with boat on the belly: Row, row, row your boat Gently down the stream Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily Life is but a dream
Starfish Starfish* Back float and back position	Red	Sing while looking up at the sky: Twinkle, twinkle little star How I wonder what you are Up above the world so high Like a diamond in the sky Twinkle, twinkle little star How I wonder what you are

(continued)

Table 5.1 *(continued)*

Name and objective	Suggested stage	Teaching points
Starfish Starfish* *(continued)*		Starfish, starfish live in the sea Starfish love to swim, just like me Starfish swim every day I want to be a starfish and splash and play Starfish, starfish live in the sea Starfish love to swim, just like me! *(It is important to explain that some children may not like the feeling of water in their ears. This song will allow the child to feel more comfortable. Have the parents lay back in the water, keeping their child cheek to cheek, but enough so that water is around the child's ears.)*
My Bonnie*	Red	Sing:
Balance, body position change, confidence building		My Bonnie lies over the ocean *(have child float on tummy and swing to the right)* My Bonnie lies over the sea *(have child float on tummy and swing to the left)* My Bonnie lies over the ocean *(have child float on tummy and swing to the right)* So bring back my Bonnie to me *(hold child close)* Bring back *(lay child on back, facing parent)* Bring back Oh bring back my Bonnie to me, to me *(hold child close)* Bring back *(lay child on back, facing parent)* Bring back Oh bring back my Bonnie to me *(hold child close)*
Tummy Ride*	Red	Lightly support student under the shoulder blades. Have them put "tummy up, toes down, head back." Place a small toy on their stomach and take it for a "ride."
Back float body position		
Humpty Dumpty*	Yellow	Play:
Submersion readiness		Humpty Dumpty *sat on the wall* Humpty Dumpty had a great fall *(child slides in the water, not going under)* All the king's horses and all the king's men *(tickles)* Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty back together again
Candles	Blue	Have students pretend to blow out candles on a cake, practice starting, stopping, and holding in the air.
Breath holding and air exchange		
Straws and Balls	Blue	Have students blow air into the water through straws, push small balls across the water surface with air through the straw. Remove the straw and blow directly in the water.
Breath holding and air exchange		
Pancake*	Blue	Sing to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot":
Rollover and rotary movement		I'm a little pancake *on my back* I'm a little pancake *laying flat* I'm a little pancake *on my back* *Just flip me over just like that* *(This activity will introduce the child to rolling over from the back to the tummy.)*
Rollover, Rollover*	Blue	Assist student in rolling from front to back, back to front. Hold student lightly at the shoulders; lift one shoulder up, and press the other down to initiate the roll.
Roll from front to back, back to front		

Name and objective	Suggested stage	Teaching points
Fireman Independent movement, submersion skills, recover to surface for air	Green	Hold a pole (metal or PVC) so that it is vertical and touching the bottom. Have students pretend to be firemen and slide down the pole, then pull themselves up the pole.
Hard and Soft **Loud and Quiet** Kicking and finning	Green	Have students kick and follow your commands: kick hard, soft, loud, quiet, etc. Do the same with finning and arm pulls. Emphasize kicking with legs straight with movement from the hips.
Kick up Kicking, vertical kick	Green	Hold a rescue tube horizontally above the water surface. Have students hold on to the tube so they are suspended vertically. Kick.
Floats Streamline body position	Green	Use flotation to help students achieve streamline body position on front, back, side. Add kick. Reinforce stretched body, straight arms, straight legs, head in line.
Dig for a Bone Forward movement	Green	Pretend to be a dog digging for a bone. See how far each student can go.
Fish Fins Streamline kicking, front, back, side	Green	Have students perform moving kicking drills (with or without flotation) wearing fins to improve kick mechanics and feel.
Kickball* Kicking skills	Green	Play kick ball. Divide the class so that there are two or three parent/child pairs per group. Have each group form a circle, with the children lying on their backs and their feet toward the center. The children will kick a ball back and forth. Parents should hold their child in a position in which they can help him or her kick the ball.

The games and activities marked with a * and as described are appropriate for infants and toddlers. The activities without a * are not appropriate for infants.

Table 5.2 StarBabies and StarTots (Parent/Child Class) Sample 4-Day Block Plan

AGES 6 MONTHS TO 36 MONTHS			
Day 1	**Day 2**	**Day 3**	**Day 4**
Course rules	Bubbles	Bubbles	Bubbles
Look Who's Coming	I Love You	Reach and Throw	Recreational water illness
Drowning prevention	Coo Coo	I Love You	I Love You
Bubbles	Lifejackets	Coo Coo	Coo Coo
I Love You	Horizontal submersion	Pancake	Relay races (kicking and pulling)
Coo Coo	Vertical submersion	Rollover, Rollover	Drifting
Front floats	Back floats	Arm movements	Back floats
Chase the Boats	Tummy Ride	Kicking	Starfish, Starfish
Back floats	Starfish, Starfish	Kickball	Sliding/Jumping
Belly Boat	Sliding/Jumping	Submersion	Sliding/Jumping with rollovers
Starfish, Starfish	Humpty Dumpty	Sliding/Jumping	Humpty Dumpty
Sliding/Jumping	If You're Happy, Splash!	Humpty Dumpty	If You're Happy, Splash!
If You're Happy, Splash!	Family fun time	If You're Happy, Splash!	Introduction to CPR
Family fun time		Family fun time	

Table 5.3 StarBabies and StarTots (Parent/Child Class) Sample 8-Day Block Plan

AGES 6 MONTHS TO 36 MONTHS			
Day 1	**Day 2**	**Day 3**	**Day 4**
Course rules	Look Who's Coming	Look Who's Coming	Look Who's Coming
Drowning prevention	Bubbles	Bubbles	Reach and Throw
Look Who's Coming	I Love You	I Love You	I Love You
Bubbles	Coo Coo	Coo Coo	Coo Coo
I Love You	Lifejackets	My Bonnie	Rollover, Rollover
Coo Coo	Front floats	Horizontal submersion	Pancake
Front floats	Chase the Boats	Vertical submersion	Submersion
Chase the Boats	Back floats	Sliding/Jumping	Back floats
Back floats	Tummy Ride	Humpty Dumpty	Starfish, Starfish
Belly Boat	Starfish, Starfish	If You're Happy, Splash!	Sliding/Jumping
Starfish, Starfish	My Bonnie	Family fun time	Sliding/Jumping with roll-overs
Obstacle course	Cueing		Humpty Dumpty
If You're Happy, Splash!	Sliding/Jumping		If You're Happy, Splash!
Family fun time	Humpty Dumpty		Family fun time
	If You're Happy, Splash!		
	Family fun time		
Day 5	**Day 6**	**Day 7**	**Day 8**
Bubbles	Bubbles	Bubbles	Bubbles
Recreational water illness	I Love You	I Love You	I Love You
I Love You	When You're Up, You're Up	When You're Up, You're Up	When You're Up, You're Up
When You're Up, You're Up	My Bonnie	Relay races (kicking and pulling)	My Bonnie
Arm movements	Obstacle course	Submersion/Drifting	Relay races (kicking and pulling)
Reach and pull for boats	Drifting	Starfish, Starfish	Submersion/Drifting
Kicking	Sliding/Jumping	Sliding/Jumping	Sliding/Jumping
Kickball	Pancake	Sliding/Jumping with roll-overs	Sliding/Jumping with roll-overs
Submersion	Sliding/Jumping with rollovers	The Wheels on the Bus	Starfish, Starfish
Sliding/Jumping	The Wheels on the Bus	Introduction to CPR	The Wheels on the Bus
Sliding/Jumping with rollovers	Family fun time		Family fun time
The Wheels on the Bus			
Family fun time			

Table 5.4 StarBabies and StarTots Summary Chart

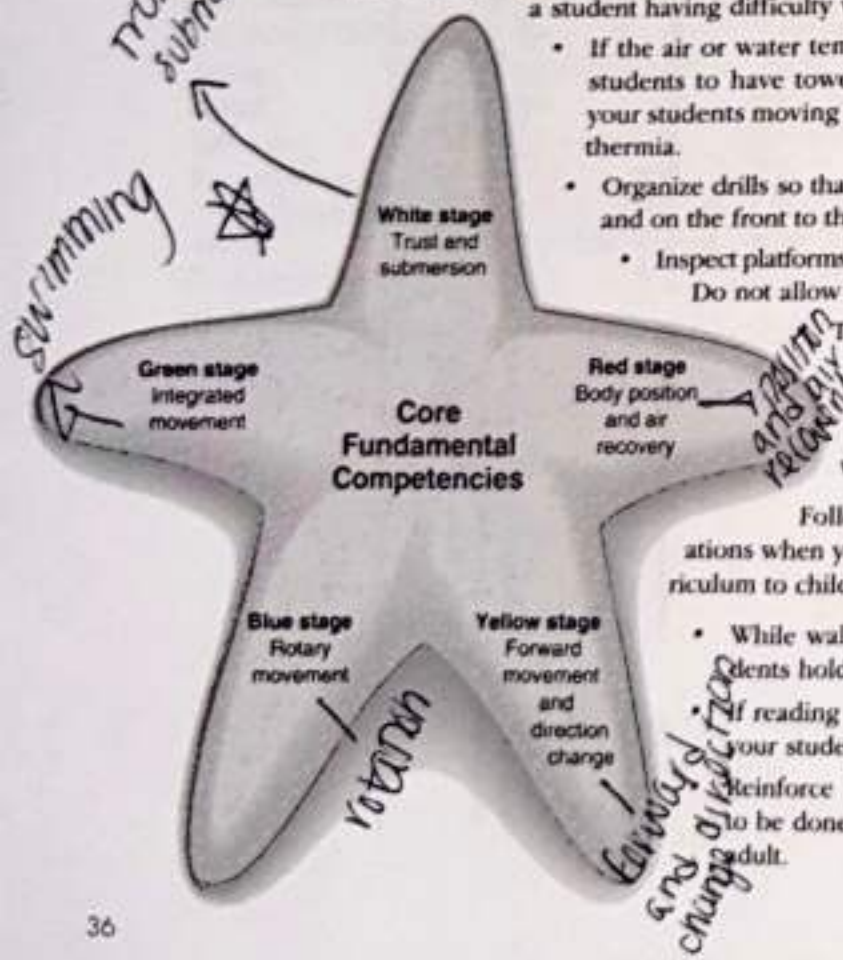
	CURRICULUM AND CORE SKILLS ACHIEVEMENT STAGES				
	White	Red	Yellow	Blue	Green
	Focus: trust and comfort	Focus: body positions	Focus: submersion	Focus: air recovery and rollover	Focus: forward movement
Lead-up skills	Drowning prevention Entries Water play Balance holds Songs	Lifejackets Front floats Back floats Counting cues Sliding Jumping Turn to wall/hold on Climb out	Reach and throw Vertical submerge Horizontal submerge	Recreational water illness Roll front to back Roll back to front Bobbing	Introduction to CPR Kicking Pulling Drifting Independent movement
Safety skill benchmark (for the parent or caregiver)	Understand constant and dedicated surveillance.	Fit and properly put a lifejacket on the child.	Use flotation to help someone in the water (Reach or throw . . . don't go) and know how to call 911.	Identify six methods of preventing recreational water illness.	Know about infant and child CPR.
Swim skill benchmark	Parent and child are relaxed and confident, and enjoy being in the water together.	Perform a relaxed front, back, vertical, and side position for at least 5 seconds each.	Enter from the wall, submerge, turn around, grab on to the wall, and pull up (assisted).	Enter from the wall, submerge, come to surface unassisted and get a breath in vertical or horizontal (on back) position.	Move through the water independently 10 feet, with or without flotation.

6

Starfish Swim School Core Competencies Teaching Model

Safety Considerations

- Regardless of the activity, position yourself so that you can see your students at all times. Never turn your back to students who may be on the wall.
- Wear your rescue tube (strap) when you are teaching. The rescue tube identifies you as an instructor, is an excellent teaching aid, and provides flotation if you need to assist a student having difficulty without having to make body contact.
- If the air or water temperatures are chilly, consider allowing students to have towels poolside or stay in the water. Keep your students moving and active and watch for signs of hypothermia.
- Organize drills so that students swim on the back out to you, and on the front to the wall in order to avoid hitting the wall.
- Inspect platforms (if used) for stability prior to each lesson. Do not allow swimming under solid platforms.
- Teach head-first entry (diving) to beginners from the deck in water that is at least twice the height of the student (i.e., 4 feet tall would require 8 feet of water).



Follow these additional safety considerations when you teach the Starfish Swim School curriculum to children:

- While walking around the deck, have your students hold hands in a line.
- If reading stories outdoors, position yourself so your students are not looking into the sun.
- Reinforce that swim school activities are only to be done with the help and supervision of an adult.

White Stage: Trust and Submersion

The White stage is where it all begins. The focus of this stage is trust and submersion. This is the stage where you will lay the groundwork for a strong foundation. A strong foundation will allow for all future stages to progress forward in building comfort, strength, and correct stroke technique.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Always ask permission before getting in the water.

Why is it important to ask permission to get in the water? You must remember that you are the instructor for not only the students but also the parents. You may be the only person in their life who will promote and teach good water safety habits. It is important for you to be just as firm with the parents as the students when it comes to water safety. Our goal is to save lives. If we teach children at our lessons to always ask permission before getting in the water, then hopefully they will learn to ask permission before going in the backyard pool, playing in the bathtub, walking down to the lake, or even running out into the ocean.

Students should ask permission to get in the water prior to every lesson. If you allow swimming prior to your lessons, still have the students exit the pool, come together as a group, go ask the parent's permission, then come back together as a group to discuss. Make sure parents understand the rule and also discuss the activity with their child in between lessons. *The Can Starfish Make a Wish?* book has an excellent poem titled "May I" to use on the very first day of lessons before introducing this concept.

If parents are not present during lessons, have the students ask the instructor or other staff member for permission before entering the pool. Also, send information home to the parents so that they will learn the concept and begin using it at home.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Assisted submerge, relaxed, 5 seconds.

Before you begin any work on forward movement or floating, it is important that you teach students the comfort of the water. Students must overcome their fears of submersion before moving on to more advanced skills. While students can learn to swim without fully submerging their face, they will have a healthier, safer, and more active aquatic experience if their fear of submersion has been overcome. You want to develop students who will consider swimming a lifetime activity. Also, remember that your goal is to develop correct stroke technique from the very beginning. Therefore, students must learn how to put their face into the water.

Submersion should not be forced. Incorporate activities into the lesson that will allow the student to choose independently to submerge. Overcoming the fear of submersion may not take place over one lesson. When working with children, try to make the activities as fun and inviting as possible. Communicate with parents so that they go home and practice in the bath tub. Fearful adults will most often take longer to learn submersion than the most fearful child. When working with adults, keep in mind that their fear of the water has been in existence for a long time. There is a real reason why they are so scared. Take the time to understand their fears and do not exert too much pressure too quickly, for adults can choose not to drive themselves to the next lesson.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Ask Permission to Get in the Water Be creative. Have the group of students all ask permission of their parents at the same time as one big group. Read "May I?" out of the *Can Starfish Make a Wish?* book. All students must ask permission of someone before entering the water.

Jump to Teacher Make sure to have the students count to three before jumping into the pool. Making the students count to three will train them over time to always wait until their instructor or parent is ready for them to get in the pool. Teach students to look before they jump, making sure that the area into which they are jumping is clear of other people and toys. Also, make sure that the student's toes are over the edge and do not allow the students to run and jump.

Sit Independently Does your student come and sit at the pool's edge or on the steps without the parent having to drag him there? This is a great skill to pass a student on when they are excited to come to swim lessons and don't need Mommy or Daddy standing poolside or within sight.

Reward students when they begin to make decisions on their own and have built up the courage to do a swim lesson without their parents at their side.

Wall Walk If a student falls into the pool and can make it back to the wall but cannot climb out by himself, he could wall walk until he can touch or until he gets to a ladder. This is a great skill to learn while singing "The Itsy Bitsy Spider." Have the students place both hands on the wall and simply scoot their hands along the edge. Give the students a destination, such as all the way to the ladder or steps.

Listen and Follow Directions Can your student sit and listen to directions? If your student hasn't received his sticker for this lead-up skill in his Personal Record book or Report Card, the parent is going to know that her child has a problem listening to the instructor. Don't give this sticker away too quickly . . . make the student earn it!

Climb Out Independently Again, if a student falls into the pool and is able to swim back to the wall but cannot climb out by himself, that student is still at risk. Swimmers need to learn how to get out of the pool by themselves so that if they are ever in a dangerous situation, they have the ability to save themselves. Teach the students to climb out by using their hands, elbows, and then knees.

Pour Water Over Head Before students will be comfortable with submersion, they must be comfortable getting water in their face. Make this activity fun by having the students pour water on your head first, then theirs. Make it even more interesting by then having the students pour water on each other's heads. This is also a great homework activity. Parents need to have their children doing this in the bathtub. If the parent does not make the child do it at home, you are going to be fighting a battle when it comes to doing it in the pool.

Jump Into the Water Once a child is comfortable jumping to the teacher, and comfortable with submersion, add the two steps together. Now the child is going to jump into the water and go under.

Hold Breath (On Land) Students must know and understand the action of holding the breath before doing so underwater. Therefore, practice on land first, then underwater. Have the students make big "fish cheeks" or act like a blowfish (hold the air in their cheeks and then let it out with a big noise).

Look Underwater and Hold Breath Once students are comfortable holding their breath on land, have them look underwater and hold their breath. Try it first without goggles and then with, so that they can see the difference. Make the pool bottom interesting with lots of sinkers or other toys.

Red Stage: Body Position and Air Recovery

The focus of the red stage is body position and air recovery. Students are now comfortable submerging themselves, so now we will teach them how to come up for air as well as various positions in which they can recover for air. Again, if a swimmer falls into the pool, she is comfortable submerging, but how does she come up for air?

Safety Skill Benchmark

Put on a lifejacket, float on back, kick 20 feet.

Why incorporate lifejackets into the curriculum? Lifejackets are considered life preservers and they are required whenever you are traveling by boat. A lifejacket is not going to preserve a student's life unless he knows how to use it. We must teach students how to control themselves in a lifejacket. If a student is in the water with his lifejacket, he needs to know how to relax so he can recover for air and rest, as well as how to propel himself to safety.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Jump in, submerge, recover for air, and lay on back (kicking and finning) for 5 seconds (in swimwear and in regular clothes).

This is a lifesaving skill. If a student falls into the water and knows how to roll over and recover for air for at least 5 seconds, it could save his life. In that 5 seconds the student could yell for

help, catch someone's attention, and potentially be rescued. It is important for students to know how to accomplish the skill wearing swimwear as well as regular clothes. A student can practice the skill over and over again in swimwear, and then fall into the pool wearing regular clothes and not know how to react. This skill also lays the foundation for proper breathing techniques in the freestyle. Students who are taught to roll over to breathe from the beginning are less likely to develop poor habits, such as lifting the head to breathe.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Wear Lifejacket and Kick Lifejackets are excellent teaching tools. The lifejacket allows the student to lie comfortably on the back. Students can achieve excellent back float positions in the lifejacket, as long as they look up at the sky. The flotation device will also allow you to work with multiple students at a time, assuming they are comfortable, on the back float and back kick.

Submerge and Float Up Students jump into the water and allow their bodies to rise to the surface. This is the first step to air recovery. It is a huge step for students to gain confidence in the buoyancy of their bodies. All future skills will be easier once students understand and trust their buoyancy in the water.

Assisted Front Streamline Students raise both arms above their head, place one hand on top of the other, and squeeze their upper arms together behind their head. You will then hold their hands and pull them through the water, making sure that the student's face is in the water.

Assisted Back Streamline Students raise both arms above their head, place one hand on top of the other, and squeeze their upper arms together behind their head. This time you will hold their hands and pull them through the water on their back. Make sure that the student's head is tilted back far enough that she is able to breathe.

Assisted and Unassisted Roll Back to Front Have the students float on their back, take in a breath, and then roll over to their front. Assist the students with this skill until they feel comfortable performing by themselves. Once the students can complete the skill on their own, have them roll over to their front and swim short distances, such as a return to the wall. This skill will teach students over time how to rest on their back and then roll over and swim until they need to rest again.

Assisted Roll Front to Back This skill is essential to accomplishing the water skill benchmark. There are many experiential activities to assist with this skill. When introducing the skill, have the students lay on their belly with their arms out like a bird or the letter T. Then have the student scoop one hand underwater to the other hand, beginning the roll motion. When both hands have touched, the swimmers will roll to the back and open both arms out again like a bird or the letter T. Because the skill is assisted, you will help the students with the body rotation and movement of their arms.

Unassisted Roll Front to Back Students will float in the water on their belly and then roll over to a back float position. Students must be able to take a breath from the back float position.

Submerge and Recover for Air Have the students jump into the water and kick up to the surface so that they may recover for air. The students will be looking for the surface, so they may only be able to get their mouth out of the water for a second. This skill is very important because it could save a student's life. That one second will allow the student to take a breath, which they can hold in their lungs until help arrives.

Assisted and Unassisted Back Float Students in a good back float position will have their head tilted up, looking at the sky, with air in their lungs, so that they remain at the top of the water. The key is the head and chest position. Work with students on this position first, and then allow them to try it by themselves. Stand over the student so that he is looking up to you. Gently hold him under his shoulder blades, and pat his chin if necessary to correct the head position. Once he is confident, and in a good position, drop your hands enough to allow him to float on his own, but not so much that you can't quickly grab him if he needs help.

Yellow Stage: Forward Movement and Direction Change

The focus of the Yellow stage is forward movement and direction change. We have taught the students thus far how to jump in and immediately recover for air. It is now time to teach them how to jump in, recover for air, and return to the wall. Parents need to understand that this skill is crucial. There are many students who only attend one or two lesson sessions and then disappear. This is often because parents do not have enough information and just assume that since their child took swimming lessons, they know how to swim. We must communicate with parents to urge them to keep their children in swimming lessons until they have *at least* passed stage Yellow. If a student passes stage Yellow, and continues to practice on a consistent basis, that student could potentially save herself if she ever fell into deep water.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Use flotation to help someone in the water (Reach or throw . . . don't go) and know how to call 911.

Teach students that if someone is in trouble in the water, the last thing they should do is jump in and try to help. If a lifeguard or responsible adult is not available, they should try to find something to reach or throw with. Some items they can reach with are a pool noodle, towel, pole, branch, or lifeguard tube. Items they can throw are lifejackets, kickboards, or other pool items that float. Ring buoys may also be used, but make sure the student knows to step on the rope, so that he can later pull the victim in. If there are no pool toys or equipment available, teach the students how to reach with their arms and legs. Remember to have the students lie down when using their arm or leg so that the victim cannot pull them into the water. The *Can Starfish Make a Wish?* book has an excellent poem titled "Reach or Throw" to read when teaching this concept.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Jump in, submerge, recover for air, forward movement on the front or back 10 feet, change direction, return to wall (in swimwear and in regular clothes).

This is another lifesaving skill. If a student falls into the water but can change direction and return to the wall, she will potentially be unharmed. This skill should be practiced over and over again. Start having the students jump in and immediately return to the wall. Gradually build up to swimming out 10 feet and then returning to the wall. Have the students practice this skill with flotation devices. Give the students resting points, such as swim to the guard tube, rest, and then return to the wall. Just make sure that the swimmers are very confident with the skill before passing them to the next stage. Some facilities have lengthened the benchmark requirement to the length from the diving board to the side wall, as well as the length from the backstroke flags to the wall. Try to associate the benchmark with some feature at your facility; just make sure that it is at least 10 feet. This skill should be practiced in swimwear as well as in regular clothes.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Reach and Throw Assists Have the students try to rescue you by using equipment that they can reach and throw with. Give the students different situations, making them think about what they should use. For instance, give the students noodles and kickboards. Have the students try to reach you with the noodles; however, they will not work because you are too far away. Then have the students throw kickboards to you, until you are able to grab on and kick your way back to the wall. Demonstrate how to reach with arms and legs, as well as towels, poles, ring buoys, and lifejackets. Remember to have the students lie down when reaching with arms and legs. Be sure when using poles and ring buoys to clear the area around the student demonstrating the skill.

Assisted and Unassisted Front Streamline With Kick Students raise both arms above their head, place one hand on top of the other, and squeeze their upper arms together behind their head. You will then hold their hands and pull them through the water, making sure that the face is in the water (see figure 6.1). Instruct the students to kick their feet lightly. Legs should be slightly bent

at the knees. Students should kick heel-up, with pointed toes, toward the surface of the water, making a tiny splash. Once students are comfortable with the skill, have them push off the wall in a streamline position and kick to you without assistance.

Assisted and Unassisted Back Streamline With Kick Students raise both arms above their head, place one hand on top of the other, and squeeze their upper arms together behind their head. This time you will hold their hands and pull them through the water on their back. Make sure that the student's head is tilted back far enough that he is able to breathe. Instruct the student to kick their feet lightly. Legs should be slightly bent at the knees. Students should kick up, with pointed toes, toward the surface of the water, making a tiny splash. Once students are comfortable with the skill, have them push off the wall in a streamline position and kick to you without assistance.

Assisted Front Streamline and Rotation to Side Glide With Kick Students perform an assisted front streamline with kick. Students will then rotate to a side glide position for air recovery. Hold the student's hands, one on top of the other, during the front streamline (you and the student will be facing each other). As you pull the student through the water, rotate your body until you are standing next to him (the student will now be perpendicular to you). Take the student's right arm and slide it through the water, resting it on the right hip. Rotate the student so that his left ear rests on the left arm, which is still stretched out in front. The student should now be resting on his left side with his mouth out of the water, breathing to the right (see figure 6.2). Try again, this time resting on the right side, breathing to the left.

Figure 6.1 Instructor assists child with front streamline position.

Figure 6.2 Instructor assists child with side glide air recovery position.

Figure 6.3 Instructor assists child with forward arm movements.

Assisted and Unassisted Forward Movement—Kick and Pull on Front Students perform forward movement both assisted and unassisted. Assisted forward movement should be performed with some type of flotation device such as a lifejacket, noodle, back pack, or built-in flotation swim suit (see figure 6.3). Forward movement does not have to consist of any certain technique. You want the students moving their arms and legs in a way that propels them forward. Teach students to reach and pull with their arms and to kick with straight legs and pointed toes; however, a student does not have to perform such correctly to pass this skill. The students just have to be moving through the water. After students have mastered the skill with flotation, practice the skill without. Teach the students to propel themselves forward with their face in the water; however, this is not necessary to pass the skill.

Assisted and Unassisted Forward Movement—Kick and Pull on Back Students perform forward movement both assisted and unassisted. Assisted forward movement should be performed with some type of flotation device such as a lifejacket, noodle, back pack, or built-in flotation swim suit. Forward movement does not have to consist of any certain technique. You want the students moving their arms and legs in a way that propels them forward. Teach students to reach and pull with their arms and to kick with straight legs and pointed toes; however, a swimmer does not have to perform such correctly to pass this skill. The student just has to be moving through the water. After a student has mastered the skill with flotation, practice the skill without. Teach the students to look up at the sky, keeping their mouth and nose out of the water.

Retrieve Submerged Object This skill requires the students to submerge, look for an object, and pick it up. Use sinkers such as rings and sticks. This skill is normally performed in water where the students can touch. If the students are unable to touch the bottom, hold the object underwater just enough to make the student submerge and take it out of your hand.

How to Call 911 Give your students scenarios in which it would be appropriate for them to call 911. An example is a student spots someone in trouble in the water. They cannot find a grown-up and their attempts to reach and throw are unsuccessful. Other examples include people who are non-responsive, seriously hurt, or unable to breathe. Either purchase a plastic telephone to keep poolside or have a poster of a telephone available for students to point to the correct numbers. Discuss the lesson topic with the parents and advise that each go home and discuss appropriate situations to call 911, as well as how to do so from home. Some local emergency agencies have a number that you can call to practice calling 911. If your community offers such, try to provide that information to the parents.

Blue Stage: Rotary Movement

The focus of the blue stage is body rotary movement. During this stage you will introduce your students to the side glide air recovery position. Notice that up to this point, you have not really focused on proper stroke technique. You are going to teach how to properly breathe first, and then add the stroke to the breathing technique. This concept is unique to the Starfish Swim School. You will find that your students have developed better breathing habits as a result of the order in which you introduced them to the skills.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Tread water for 15 seconds.

Your students have already learned how to jump in and roll over to rest, and how to get back to the wall. However, they have not learned to tread water, which is another essential safety skill. Treading water, when done correctly, will allow a student to vertically recover air for longer periods of time. Therefore, it is essential for students to tread with their heads out of the water, and at a pace that is comfortable and does not exert too much energy. There are various arm and leg movements that can be performed. The most common arm movement is scooping both arms out and then back in (out like a bird and come in to a clap). Leg movements consist of flutter kicking, bicycling, egg-beater (whip kick with one leg then the other), breaststroke kick, and even butterfly kick. Students must be able to vertically hold their head out of the water for at least 15 seconds. Students will need to continue to practice treading water until they can perform both the blue and green safety skill benchmarks.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Jump in, recover to side glide, kick 10 feet.

After completing this benchmark, the student should feel comfortable using the side glide as an air recovery position. The student will jump into the water, then roll into a side glide position. The student's right arm will rest on the right hip. The student's left ear will rest on the left arm, which should be stretched out in front. The student will then be resting on her left side with her mouth out of the water, breathing to the right. The student will need to kick out 10 feet, using a light flutter kick. Legs should be slightly bent at the knees and in line with the hips. Try again, this time resting on the right side, breathing to the left. The student only needs to be able to perform the side glide to one side to pass the benchmark; however, have the student practice the skill on both sides as much as possible.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Tread Water This skill enables students to vertically recover for air. The student's head should be out of the water the entire time. This skill does not require any particular leg or arm movements. The most common arm movement is scooping both arms out and then back in (out like a bird and come in to a clap). Leg movements may consist of flutter kicking, bicycling, egg beater (whip kick with one leg then the other), breaststroke kick, and even butterfly kick. The students should practice various methods until they find one that is comfortable and efficient. Treading water should not require a lot of energy. It may take young swimmers a longer time to use less energy.

Assisted and Unassisted Side Glide With Kick—Both Sides There are many ways to assist your students with the side glide and kick. You may use the noodle glide or tube pull (listed later in the Experiential Activities), or you may hold the student, helping her into the correct position. Stand behind the student, so that she is on her left side, with her back to you (see figure 6.4). Take the student's right arm and rest it on her right hip. Stretch the student's left arm out in front, and rest the student's left ear on the left arm. The student should now be resting on her left side with her mouth out of the water, breathing to the right. Try again, this time resting on the right side, breathing to the left. While holding the student, have her perform a light flutter kick, with legs slightly bent at the knees, and walk with her through the water. After the student feels comfortable assisted, try unassisted on both sides.

Figure 6.4 Instructor assists child with side glide air recovery position.

Roll From Side Glide to Streamline to Side Glide The student will begin in a side glide position with kick (see figure 6.5a). After inhaling, the student will take the arm that is resting on the hip, and pull it into a front streamline position (see figure 6.5b). The student will kick in the front streamline position while she exhales. When she is ready to take a breath, she will rotate into the opposite side glide position from where she started (see figure 6.5c). The student will kick in the side glide position and inhale.

Unassisted Front Streamline With Kick and Rotation to Back Streamline The students have already learned how to perform a front streamline and a back streamline. They also know how to roll over. This skill focuses on the entire body rotation from the front to a back air recovery position, while maintaining a proper streamlined position. The students may push off the wall, kicking

Figure 6.5 Student begins in a side glide position, breathing to the right (a); student rolls to a streamline body position (b); student rolls to a side glide position, breathing to the left (c).

in a front streamline position. When they are ready to take a breath, the students will rotate their entire body into a back streamline position and keep kicking.

Unassisted Back Streamline With Kick and Rotation to Front Streamline This skill focuses on the entire body rotation from a back air recovery position to the front while maintaining a proper streamlined position. The student may push off the wall, kicking in a back streamline position. After the student has taken a breath, the student will rotate his entire body into a front streamline position and keep kicking. The student should exhale into the water as he is kicking.

Side Glide, One Overarm Pull, Roll to Back to Rest and Breathe The students will begin in a side glide position with kick. After inhaling, the students will perform an overarm pull with the arm that is resting on the hip. The students will exhale into the water, then roll over to a back float position to rest and breathe. This skill is to remind the students that while the side glide is the air recovery position, if they ever get really tired and feel that they cannot roll into a side glide position, they should roll over to rest and breathe as they were taught previously.

Side Glide, One Overarm Pull, Roll to Opposite Side Glide to Rest and Breathe The students will begin in a side glide position with kick. After inhaling, the students will perform an overarm pull with the arm that is resting on the hip. The students will rotate through the water to the opposite side glide position to rest and breathe.

Side Glide, One Backstroke Pull, Roll to Opposite Side Glide to Rest and Breathe The students will begin in a side glide position with kick. The students will perform a backstroke pull and rotate their body to the opposite side glide position to rest and breathe.

Green Stage: Integrated Movement

The focus of the Green stage is integrated movement. The students have been taught to roll into a side glide position for air recovery. Now we are going to integrate pulls with the air recovery position, resulting in a beginner stage freestyle and beginner stage backstroke. Students will learn bilateral breathing. Bilateral breathing is much easier to learn during the development stage of the stroke, rather than after the stroke has already been developed. At the conclusion of stage Green, students will be able to swim 30 feet of freestyle, breathing to both sides. The stroke mechanics will not be perfect; however, the student will have developed a consistent breathing pattern and will have an easier time correcting stroke mechanics.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Survival float and tread water for 30 seconds.

The students are going to survival float, another essential safety skill, and continue to build up their endurance while treading water. To survival float, the student will relax in a front float position, allowing their legs to hang in the water. Breaths should be consistent with the natural breath pattern. When the student needs to breathe, she will lift her head, inhale, and then immediately relax into the front float position again. The student will continue such for at least 30 seconds. Teach students to only use the survival float as a safety position if they become tired in the water and cannot return to the shore or edge of the pool. The survival float is ideal for the ocean, when waves are constantly beating up against the body. Swimmers should wait to lift their heads to breathe until they feel their bodies rise to the peak of the wave. The student must also be able to tread water for 30 seconds.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Start in side glide, swim freestyle 30 feet with 1-2-3 breathe pattern.

The students will start in a side glide position, perform three overarm pulls, and rotate to the opposite side glide position. The students will continue to do so until they have reached at least 30 feet. The students will only recover for air during the side glide position. The students' overarm pulls do not necessarily need to be out of the water. The main focus is to perform correct body rotation from the overarm pulls to the side glide position.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Survival Float The students will relax in a front float position, allowing their legs to hang in the water. When the students need to breathe, they will lift their head, inhale, and then immediately relax into the front float position again. Students will need to continue to practice the survival float until they are capable of performing the safety skill benchmark.

Start in Side Glide, Three Overarm Pulls, Roll to Back The students will start in a side glide position. After inhaling, the students will rotate to the front and perform three overarm pulls. The students will exhale into the water during the three overarm pulls. At their completion, the students will roll over into a back float position. This skill will train the students to remember to always roll over into a back float position if they get really tired and are unable to rotate into a side glide position to breathe.

Start in Side Glide, Three Overarm Pulls, Roll to Opposite Side Glide The students will start in a side glide position. After inhaling, the students will rotate to the front and perform three overarm pulls. The students will exhale into the water during the three overarm pulls. At their completion, the students will rotate to the opposite side glide to rest and breathe.

Start in Side Glide, Link Three Sets of Three Overarm Pulls, Roll to Opposite Side Glide to Breathe The students will start in a side glide position. The students will link three sets of three overarm pulls, remembering to rotate to the side glide position in between sets to rest and breathe. The students will have performed nine overarm pulls, with proper bilateral breathing techniques, at the conclusion of the skill.

Start in Side Glide, Link Three Sets of Three Backstroke Pulls, Roll to Opposite Side Glide to Rest The students will start in a side glide position. The students will link three sets of backstroke pulls, remembering to rotate to the side glide position in between sets to rest. The students will have performed nine backstroke pulls with good body rotation into a resting position at the conclusion of the skill.

Head-First Entry (Dive) From Side If a water depth of 6 feet is available, the students will perform a head-first entry (dive) from the side of the pool. Follow the five stages of diving to teach a proper head-first entry. Stages 4 and 5 will be introduced in stroke school. *Stage 1: Sit.* Have the students sit on the edge of the pool, with both arms raised into a streamline position. The students will push off the wall with their legs, keeping their head down, and perform a shallow dive. Assist if necessary by holding the student's hands and helping with the head-first entry. *Stage 2: Squat.* After the seated dive, the student can practice a kneeling dive or squatting dive. Have the student kneel on either one knee or both knees or simply squat. Take into consideration that some pool gutter systems or walls can be very difficult for students to perform a kneeling dive from. Therefore, have the student squat with both feet on the edge of the pool, in a very compact position. The student will raise both arms into a streamline position and lean forward. As the student begins to fall, she will push with her feet if necessary. *Stage 3: Stand.* A standing dive should be performed with both toes over the edge of the pool and arms raised into a streamline position. The student should lean toward the pool and as she feels herself begin to fall, push her toes up so that she dives head first into the water.

Table 6.1 Starfish Swim School Games and Experiential Activities

Name and objective	Suggested stage	Teaching points
Pool Tour Facility safety orientation	Any	Walk around the pool area and talk about safety features, rules, and introduce the lifeguard.
May I? To teach the habit of asking permission before getting in the water	White	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Jump To teach the habit of feet-first entry into shallow water	White	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Jump In Trust building; develop sense that water is buoyant, independent movement	White	Have students jump to you; jump to the rescue tube; jump independently. Add kicking, holding on to the tube, and returning to the side.
In and Out Safe entry and exit from the pool	White	Have students get in and out of the water in various ways, (i.e., at wall, stairs, zero depth, etc.).
Wall Walk Independent movement, confidence building	White	Have students hold on to the gutter's edge and pull themselves along the pool wall. Explore the pool.
Treasure Opening eyes, submersion skills	Any	Submerge items of various sizes in different depths of water appropriate for the student; have student recover the items.
Eyes on Me To teach the concept of constant supervision	White	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Tuck and Stand Balance, body position change, confidence building	White	Have students hold on to the tube or noodle, stretch body to horizontal position. Practice drawing knees into chest to tuck, then stand up.
Starfish Float Relaxed submersion	White	Pretend to be a starfish, with arms and legs spread. Perform in vertical and horizontal (floating) positions.
Starfish, Starfish Relaxed submersion	White	Sing the water safety rhyme to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" to prepare for the Starfish Float.
Candles Breath holding and air exchange	White and red	Have students pretend to blow out candles on a cake; practice starting, stopping, and holding in the air.
Straws and Balls Breath holding and air exchange	White and red	Have students blow air into the water through straws; push small balls across the water surface with air through the straw. Remove the straw and blow directly in the water.
Underwater Band Submersion skills, breath control	White and red	Assign students different imaginary instruments and sounds. On your count, students submerge and play their instrument.
Over and Under Trust building, independent movement, direction change, balance	White and red	Have students move in different ways: going over the rescue tube, under the tube, around the tube, etc.
Fireman Independent movement, submersion skills, recover to surface for air	Red	Hold a pole (metal or PVC) so that it is vertical and touching the bottom. Have students pretend to be firemen and slide down the pole, then pull themselves up the pole.
Roll over, Roll over Roll from front to back, back to front	Red	Assist student in rolling from front to back, back to front. Hold student lightly at the shoulders, lift one shoulder up and press the other down to initiate the roll.

Name and objective	Suggested stage	Teaching points
Alligator Wrestle Develop comfort with rolling from the front to the back	Red	This activity a great for older students. Have students stand in the water and hug the rescue tube, resting their cheeks against the side of the tube. Have students lie horizontally in the water and wrap their legs around the tube. The rescue tube will flip the students onto their backs.
Zoom Zoom Float To teach the concept of rolling onto the back to rest and breathe	Red	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Brittany Has a Lifejacket To teach the concept that wearing a lifejacket is fun	Red	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Visor Quiz Back float body position	Red	Lightly support student under the shoulder blades. Have them put their "tummy up, toes down, head back," and ask them what they see under your visor.
Tummy Ride Back float body position	Red	Lightly support student under the shoulder blades. Have them put "tummy up, toes down, head back." Place a small toy on their stomach and take it for a "ride."
Hard and Soft **Loud and Quiet** Kicking and finning	Red	Have students kick and follow your commands: kick hard, soft, loud, quiet, etc. Do the same with finning and arm pulls. Emphasize kicking with legs straight with movement from the hips.
Kick Up Kicking, vertical kick	Red	Hold a rescue tube horizontally above the water surface. Have students hold on to the tube so they are suspended vertically. Kick.
Floats Streamline body position	Red and yellow	Use flotation to help students achieve streamline body position on front, back, side. Add kick. Reinforce stretched body, straight arms, straight legs, head in line.
Obstacle Course Independent movement, direction change	Red and yellow	Position rescue tubes, other equipment, and activities in a sequence. Have students complete the course individually or as a team.
Rope Pull Pulling, forward movement	Red and yellow	Position a rope or tubing about 1 foot under the water. Have students pull themselves, with head submerged, along the rope hand over hand. Add overarm recovery.
Splish Splash Zoom To teach the concept of kicking and pulling to create forward movement	Yellow	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Reach or Throw To teach the concept of not getting in the water to help if someone is in trouble	Yellow	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Tube Pull Streamline and side glide	Yellow	Have students hold on to the strap of the rescue tube. Pull them forward through the water in a streamline and side glide position.
Dig for a Bone Forward movement	Yellow	Pretend to be a dog digging for a bone. See how far each student can go.
Fish Fins Streamline kicking, front, back, side	Blue	Have students perform moving kicking drills (with or without flotation) wearing fins to improve kick mechanics and feel.

[continued]

Table 6.1 *(continued)*

Name and objective	Suggested stage	Teaching points
Noodle Glide Side glide	Blue	Have student extend one arm along a noodle and balance in side glide position. Help the student keep the upper shoulder back to maintain balance. Have the student kick to create forward movement.
Hot Dog Roll Side glide roll	Blue	Same as Noodle Glide, but rotate noodle to help student roll from side glide to back, side glide to front glide, etc. Maintain streamline position through the roll.
Smooth the Sand Treading water	Blue	Have students pretend to have their hands in a pile of sand, and simulate "smoothing" down the pile. Demonstrate the smoothing (sculling) motion. If available, have students perform in a box of real sand (or packing peanuts).
Lifejacket Relay Lifejacket comfort, buoyancy, and balance	Blue and green	Divide students into teams. Each student must put on a lifejacket, enter the water, swim around a designated point (on front or back), climb out, and pass lifejacket to the next student. Unclipped buckles disqualify the team.
Hang Dog Survival float position	Green	Students simulate a dog floating in the water (four legs hanging down) and lifting the head to breathe.
Jellyfish Survival float position	Green	Students simulate a jellyfish floating in the water with tentacles hanging down; emphasize holding air in the lungs to float.
Survival Timed survival float	Green	Time students on survival float to see who can last the longest.
1-2-3 Breathe Side glide to freestyle with breath	Green	Have students start in side glide with kick. Perform 3 overarm freestyle pulls. Keep last pull arm extended. Roll to side glide to rest and breathe.
3 × 3 Linked side glide to freestyle with breathing	Green	Same as above, but have students link three sets of 1-2-3 Breathe.
Dive To teach basics of safe diving	Green	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Superman Head-first entry (diving)	Green	Have students imitate the Superman flying position and bend over to point the hands toward the water; assist the tip-in. Emphasize keeping the head down and between the arms until the legs enter the water.
Much to Do To introduce lifetime aquatic activities	Any	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Water Wonders To introduce enjoyment of varied aquatic venues	Any	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Don't Drink the Water To teach the concept that pool water is not for drinking	Any	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Slip Slop Slap To teach the habit of sun protection	Any	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.
Can Starfish Make a Wish? To teach the importance of learning	Any	Read the water safety rhyme slowly, clearly, and with emotion. Use story to lead into brief discussion.

These games and activities are appropriate for preschool and elementary age levels; the activities may be adapted for use with primary and older students.

Table 6.2 Starfish Swim School Sample Block Plan

AGES: PRESCHOOL (3 TO 5 YEARS) STAGES: WHITE AND RED			
Day 1	**Day 2**	**Day 3**	**Day 4**
Introductions Pool Tour May I? Ask permission Candles Bubbles with wand Straws and Balls Ring Around the Roses (we all blow bubbles) Fish cheeks (kiss water, hold breath) Pour water over head Jumps In and Out Wall Walk (spider song) Treasure Hunt	Eyes on Me Ask permission Ring Around the Roses (we all blow bubbles) Wall Walk Jump into water with and without flotation Tuck and Stand Starfish Float on tummy Tummy Ride Starfish, Starfish on back Treasure Hunt	Ask permission Starfish floats on steps or with noodles Over and Under Freeman Kick Up Jumps with flotation for air recovery, say Starfish, Starfish, Starfish Air recovery without flotation Group kick on tube	Buttony Has a Lifejacket Ask permission Group kick on tube Jumps with flotation for air recovery Jump in and Starfish Float Roll over, Roll over Jump in, roll over with flotation Kick on back with lifejackets
Day 5	**Day 6**	**Day 7**	**Day 8**
Ask permission Group kick on tube Jumps with Starfish floats Air recovery with or without flotation Hot dog roll Roll over, Roll over Jump in, roll over with flotation Jump in, roll over without flotation Back kick with noodles	Ask permission Review air recovery and roll over Kick on front with noodles Tube pull (streamline on front and back) Alligator arms (streamline with or without flotation) Rope pull Jump in and dig for a bone with lifejacket Jump in and return to wall with lifejacket Treasure Hunt	Bubble, Bubble, Breathe Ask permission Review air recovery and roll over Tube pull (streamline on front and back) Alligator arms (streamline with or without flotation) Hard and Soft, Loud and Quiet Dig for a Bone Obstacle course	Ask permission Hard and Soft, Loud and Quiet Review benchmarks achieved Obstacle course: • Jumps • Wall walking • Over and Under • Treasure Hunt • In and Out Awards

Table 6.3 Starfish Swim School Sample Block Plan

AGES: PRESCHOOL (3 TO 5 YEARS)
STAGES: RED AND YELLOW

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Introductions	Zoom Zoom Float	Brittany Has a Lifejacket	Ask permission
Pool tour	Ask permission	Ask permission	Kick on front with noodles
May I?	Review jumps for air recovery	Review air recovery and roll over	Hard and Soft, Loud and Quiet
Ask permission	Starfish float on tummy	Tube pull (streamline on front and back)	Rope pull
Group kick on tube	Visor Quiz	Alligator arms (streamline with or without flotation)	Jump in and dig for a bone with lifejacket
Ring Around the Rosies (all fall down)	Starfish, Starfish on back	Kick on back with lifejackets	Jump in and return to wall with lifejacket
Jump into water with or without flotation	Hot dog roll	Jump in, roll over, kick on back	Monkey arms (reach and pull)
Kick Up	Roll over, Roll over	Rope pull	Obstacle course
Jumps with or without flotation for air recovery, say Starfish, Starfish, Starfish	Jump in, roll over with or without flotation		
Starfish float on tummy	Tube pull (streamline on front and back)		
Starfish, Starfish on back	Alligator arms (streamline with or without flotation)		
Treasure Hunt	Fireman		

Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
Splish Splash Zoom	Reach or Throw	Ask permission	Much to Do
Ask permission	Ask permission	Review Reach or Throw	Ask permission
Kick on front with noodles	Reach or Throw (Don't go) with arm, leg, noodle, kickboard, pole, etc.	Kick on front and back with noodles	Review Reach or Throw
Kick on back with noodles	Front streamline with kick	Assisted side glide with kick	Group kick with tube or noodles
Review air recovery and roll over	Back streamline with kick	Forward movement without flotation	Review benchmarks achieved
Floats (front, back, side)	Assisted side glide with kick	Jump in, roll over, kick on back, return to wall on tummy	Fireman in deeper water
Dig for a Bone	Forward movement on front with and without flotation	Jump in, submerge, recover for air, forward movement, and return to wall	Treasure Hunt
Jump in and dig for a bone	Forward movement on back with and without flotation	Retrieve submerged object	Awards
Monkey arms (reach and pull)	Jump in, submerge, recover for air, forward movement, and return to wall	Jump in and retrieve submerged object	
Jump in and return to wall with or without flotation	Retrieve submerged object		
Obstacle course			

Table 6.4 Starfish Swim School Sample Block Plan

AGES: PRESCOOL (3 TO 5 YEARS)
STAGES: YELLOW AND BLUE

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Introductions	Ask permission	Reach or Throw	Ask permission
Pool tour	Splish Splash Zoom	How to call 911	Review Reach or Throw
May I?	Group kick with noodles	Ask permission	Review how to call 911
Ask permission	Review streamline on front and back	Reach or Throw (Don't go! with arm, leg, noodle, kickboard, pole, etc.	Scenario assist and call 911
Jumps	Rope pull	Scenario assist and call 911	Noodle glide
Kick on front with noodles	Jump in and dig for a bone with flotation if needed	Jump in and return to wall with or without flotation	Tube pull (side glide with kick)
Tube pull (streamline on front)	Monkey arms (reach and pull on front and back with flotation if needed)	Tube pull (side glide with kick)	Assisted and unassisted side glide with kick
Streamline on front	Jump in, roll over, reach and pull for 10 ft. with flotation if needed	Assisted and unassisted side glide with kick	Jump in and return to wall without flotation
Kick on back with noodles	Reach and pull on front from instructor to wall	Jump in, roll over, reach and pull for 10 ft. and return to wall with and without flotation	Jump in, roll over, reach and pull for 10 ft. and return to wall without flotation
Tube pull (streamline on back)	Swim on front through hoop	Jump in and retrieve submerged object	Jump in and retrieve submerged object
Streamline on back	Treasure Hunt		
Rope pull			
Dig for a Bone with flotation if needed			
Treasure Hunt			

Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission	Slip Slop Slap
Streamline on front	Front streamline with kick and rotation to back streamline	Assisted and unassisted side glide with kick and rotation	Ask permission
Streamline on back	Back streamline with kick and rotation to front streamline	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to back to rest and breathe	Streamline on front and back
Front streamline with kick and rotation to back streamline	Assisted and unassisted side glide with kick and rotation for 10 ft.	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to back to rest and breathe
Back streamline with kick and rotation to front streamline	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to back to rest and breathe	Side glide, one backstroke pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe
Noodle glide	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe	Side glide and kick 10 ft.	Side glide, one backstroke pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe
Hot dog roll with noodle or tube	Side glide, one backstroke pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe	Smooth the Sand and kick for 15 s.	Review benchmarks achieved
Assisted and unassisted side glide with kick and rotation for 10 ft.	Smooth the Sand and kick for 15 s.		Awards
Fish Fins			
Smooth the Sand and kick			

Table 6.5 Starfish Swim School Sample Block Plan

AGES: PRESCHOOL (3 TO 5 YEARS)
STAGES: BLUE AND GREEN

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Introductions	Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission
Pool tour	Fish Fins	Assisted and unassisted side glide with kick and rotation	Unassisted side glide with kick on both sides
May I?	Front streamline with kick and rotation to back streamline	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to back to rest and breathe	Jump in, recover to side glide
Ask permission	Back streamline with kick and rotation to front streamline	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe	Side glide and kick 10 ft
Streamline on front	Hot dog roll	Side glide, one backstroke pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe	Start in side glide, 3 overarm pulls, roll to back
Streamline on back	Assisted and unassisted side glide with kick and rotation for 10 ft	Side glide and kick 10 ft	Smooth the Sand and kick for 15 s
Front streamline with kick and rotation to back streamline	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to back to rest and breathe	Smooth the Sand and kick for 15 s	Jellyfish
Back streamline with kick and rotation to front streamline	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe		Lifejacket Relay
Noodle glide	Side glide, one backstroke pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe		
Assisted and unassisted side glide			
Hot dog roll			
Smooth the Sand			

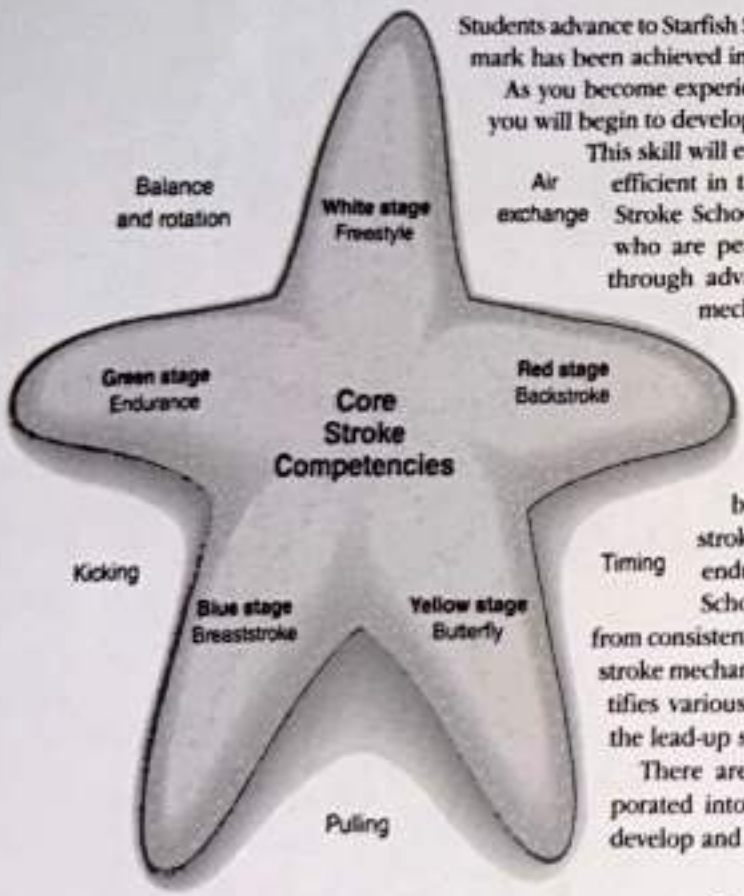
Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
Ask permission	Dive	Ask permission	Ask permission
Group noodle glide	Ask permission	Group kick with kickboards	Group kick with kickboards
Unassisted side glide with kick on both sides for 10 ft	Group kick with kickboards	Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 overarm pulls, roll to opposite side glide to breathe	Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 overarm pulls, roll to opposite side glide to breathe
Start in side glide, 3 overarm pulls, roll to back	Start in side glide, 3 overarm pulls, roll to opposite side glide	Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 backstroke pulls, roll to opposite side glide to rest	Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 backstroke pulls, roll to opposite side glide to rest
Start in side glide, 3 overarm pulls, roll to opposite side glide	Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 overarm pulls, roll to opposite side glide to breathe	Start in side glide, swim freestyle 30 ft. with 1-2-3 breathe pattern	Review benchmarks achieved
Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 overarm pulls, roll to opposite side glide to breathe	Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 backstroke pulls, roll to opposite side glide to rest	Survivor	Diving
Lifejacket Relay	Survivor	Superman	Awards
Hang Dog	Superman	Diving	

Table 6.6 Starfish Swim School Summary Chart

	CURRICULUM AND CORE SKILLS ACHIEVEMENT STAGES				
	White	Red	Yellow	Blue	Green
Lead-up skills	Focus: trust and submersion	Focus: body position and air recovery	Focus: forward movement and direction change	Focus: rotary movement	Focus: integrated movement
	Ask permission to get in water	Put on a lifejacket and kick	Reach and throw assists	Tread water	Survival float
	Jump in to teacher	Submerge underwater and float back to the top	Assisted and unassisted front streamline with kick	Assisted and unassisted side glide with kick, both sides	Start in side glide, 3 overarm pulls, roll to back to rest and breathe
	Sit independently	Assisted front streamline	Assisted and unassisted back streamline with kick	Roll from side glide to streamline to side glide	Start in side glide, 3 overarm pulls, roll to opposite side glide
	Wall Walk	Assisted back streamline	Assisted front streamline and rotation to side glide with kick	Unassisted front streamline with kick and rotation to back streamline	Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 overarm pulls, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe
	Listen and follow directions	Assisted and unassisted roll back to front	Assisted and unassisted forward movement, kick and pull on front	Unassisted back streamline with kick and rotation to front streamline	Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 backstroke pulls, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe
	Climb out independently	Assisted and unassisted roll front to back	Assisted and unassisted forward movement, kick and pull on back	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to back to rest and breathe	Head-first entry (dive) from side (if deep water is available)
	Pour water over head	Submerge and recover for air (Go underwater, kick to the top, put head back to get mouth out of the water and say "Starfish, Starfish, Starfish.")	Retrieve submerged object	Side glide, one overarm pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe	
	Jump into the water and get head wet	Assisted and unassisted back float	How to call 911	Side glide, one backstroke pull, roll to opposite side glide to rest and breathe	
	Hold breath (on land)				
	Look underwater and hold breath (with and without goggles)				
Safety skill benchmark	Always ask permission before getting in the water	Put on a lifejacket, float on back, kick 20 ft	Reach or Throw (Don't Go) and know how to call 911	Tread water 15 s	Survival float and tread water for 30 s
Swim skill benchmark	Assisted submersion, relaxed, 5 s (for long enough for teacher to say "Starfish, Starfish, Starfish") and then come up to breathe	Jump in, submerge, recover for air, roll on back (kicking and finning) for 5 s (for long enough for teacher to say "Starfish, Starfish, Starfish") • This benchmark must be performed in swimwear and in regular clothes	Jump in, submerge, recover for air, forward movement (on the front or back) 10 ft, change direction, and return to wall • This benchmark must be performed in swimwear and in regular clothes	Jump in, submerge, recover to side glide position and kick 10 ft	Start in side glide, swim freestyle 30 ft with 1 2 3 breathe pattern

7

Starfish Stroke School Core Competencies Teaching Model



Students advance to Starfish Stroke School when the Green stage benchmark has been achieved in Starfish Swim School, regardless of age. As you become experienced and proficient in teaching strokes, you will begin to develop the ability to analyze stroke mechanics. This skill will enable you to help students become more efficient in the water. Teaching or coaching Starfish Stroke School may involve working with beginners who are performing the strokes at a novice level, through advanced students working on improving mechanics to help speed and endurance.

The Stroke School curriculum will identify lead-up skills within each stroke stage that focus on balance and rotation, air exchange, timing, pulling, and kicking. Each stage contains a swim skill benchmark that incorporates all proper stroke mechanics and an appropriate level of endurance. All students in the Starfish Stroke School, regardless of ability level, can benefit from consistent use of drills to teach or reinforce proper stroke mechanics. Therefore, the curriculum also identifies various drills that can be used to accomplish the lead-up skills and benchmarks.

There are also safety skill benchmarks incorporated into the curriculum that will continue to develop and strengthen good water safety habits.

Safety Considerations

- Regardless of the activity, position yourself so that you can see your students at all times. Never turn your back to students who may be on the wall.
- Wear your rescue tube (strap) when you are teaching. If you choose to get out of the pool to analyze a student's stroke from a different position, make sure to keep the

rescue tube with you in your arms. Do not let the rescue tube drag behind you on the pool deck.

- **If the air or water temperatures are chilly, consider allowing students to have towels poolside or stay in the water. Keep your students moving and active and watch for signs of hypothermia.**
- **Organize drills so that students swim on the back out to you, and on the front to the wall in order to avoid hitting the wall.**
- **Inspect platforms (if used) for stability prior to each lesson. Do not allow swimming under solid platforms.**
- **Teach head-first entry (diving) to beginners from the deck in water that is at least twice the height of the student (i.e., 4 feet tall would require 8 feet of water).**

Follow these additional safety considerations when you teach the Starfish Stroke School curriculum to children:

- **While walking around the deck, have your students hold hands in a line.**
- **If reading stories outdoors, position yourself so your students are not looking into the sun.**
- **Reinforce that swim school activities are only to be done with the help and supervision of an adult.**

White Stage: Freestyle

The focus of the White stage is freestyle with an introduction to backstroke. Students will already have a foundation to build upon with these two strokes. They have already learned proper breathing techniques for these strokes during the swim school stages. Therefore, the stroke school reinforces those habits while developing and critiquing proper stroke mechanics.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Always ask permission before getting in the water.

No matter how advanced a child may become, it is still important for them to communicate with their parents or other adults when in, on, or near the water. Our goal is to develop lifelong habits that will increase water safety awareness. Therefore, the students must ask permission from their parents or caregivers before getting in the water.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Swim freestyle 30 feet with body stretched out and consistent form; swim 30 feet of triple-switch backstroke.

Students swim 30 feet of freestyle demonstrating correct stroke mechanics such as high elbow recovery, thumb touch, center line pull, body rotation, and exhalation in the water. The students will also swim 30 feet of the triple-switch backstroke drill. During the drill the students will perform backstroke arm movements by lifting the arm straight up from the leg to a 30-degree angle, then a 60-degree angle, and lastly a 90-degree angle. In between each angle the students will rest their hand back on their leg. So, the students will lift their arm "up a little bit, up a little bit more," and then rotate the arm "all the way around." Use the verbal cues when demonstrating the drill. Up to this point, the students have not focused on straight arm movements out of the water for backstroke, so their arm movements may be too bent or out to the side instead of straight up. This is a great first drill to introduce the proper mechanics for the backstroke pull.

Lead-Up Skills

Ask Permission to Get in the Water Be creative. Have the group of students all ask permission of their parents at the same time as one big group. Read "May I?" out of the *Can Starfish Make a Wish?* book. All students must ask permission of someone before entering the water.

High Elbow Recovery The students should perform high elbow recovery during the overarm pull of the stroke. As the hand exits the water from the underwater pull, students will lift their elbow high into the air, keeping the fingertips down. Students will maintain the high elbow recovery until the fingertips enter the water for another pull.

Thumb Touch The student's thumb should slide past his hip, hence "touch," during the underwater pull of the stroke. The student's hand enters the water, pulls down the center line of the body, and past the hip. As the hand slides past the hip, which is rotated to the side, the student's thumb will slightly touch it before exiting the water.

Center Line Pull The movement of the hand and the majority of the underwater propulsion are to be done underneath the body down the center line. Imagine a line running from the nose to the naval. The hand will enter the water straight from the shoulder and then pull toward the center line until it scoops out past the hip.

Body Rotation Each pull ends with a forward reach into the water. The entire body should rotate into the reach. Imagine throwing a baseball. If you are right-handed, your entire right side rotates back for momentum and then forward for the propulsion. It is the same with swimming freestyle. Your right hip rotates back during the underwater pull and rotates forward during the forward reach. Therefore, your body is always rotating and never flat.

Exhale in the Water Students should exhale their air into the water before rotating to the side to breathe. As the students rotate to the side for air, they inhale and then exhale as their face reenters the water. The exhale should be timed so that the body is ready to inhale at the next side glide recovery.

Triple-Switch Backstroke Rest both hands on the thighs. Lift one arm straight up to a 45-degree angle, then a 90-degree angle, and then rotate the arm all the way around. Perform the three movements with one arm and then rotate the body to perform the movements with the other arm.

Red Stage: Backstroke

The focus of the Red stage is backstroke, with an introduction to butterfly. Why teach butterfly before breaststroke? Introducing students to the dolphin motion before teaching the breaststroke will allow the students to incorporate the dolphin motion more easily into the breaststroke. Butterfly is also easier to teach than breaststroke but is often harder to swim.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Put on a lifejacket from in the water, kick 30 feet.

We previously taught students that if they ever see someone in trouble, reach or throw something to them. One of the objects often available around the water is a lifejacket. However, if a student is thrown a lifejacket and cannot put it on in the water, it may not do them any good. Students will need to be in water where they cannot touch. Throw the student a lifejacket and have him turn it over so that the inside of the lifejacket is facing out. Have the student put one arm in the correct hole, pulling the lifejacket underneath his body, and lay back. Then the student will put the other arm in and fasten the belts. It is imperative that he lay back as much as possible during this skill, so that the lifejacket is put on properly. After the lifejacket is secure, the student will kick 30 feet on the back.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Swim 30 feet of backstroke with straight arm recovery, body roll, good arm and body extension; swim 15 feet of arm down pulsing.

At the completion of stage Red, a student will be able to swim 30 feet of backstroke demonstrating good stroke mechanics such as straight arm recovery, little finger first entry, bent arm pull, body and arm extension, backstroke kick, and body rotation. The student will also be able to perform arm down pulsing, the butterfly body motion, for 15 feet. To perform arm down pulsing,

the student will place both arms at her sides. The student will press the chest down and hips up, then press the hips down, allowing the chest to come back up. Notice that the student is not kicking her feet. The drill focuses only on the motion of the chest and hips. The student will continue this wormlike movement for 15 feet. Keep in mind that this drill may be performed very slowly by beginner students.

Lead-Up Skills

Put on a Lifejacket in the Water Throw the student a lifejacket and have him turn it over so that the inside of the lifejacket is facing out. Have the student put one arm in the correct hole, pulling the lifejacket underneath his body, and lay back. Then the student will put the other arm in and fasten the belts. It is imperative that he lay back as much as possible during this skill so that the lifejacket is put on properly.

Straight Arm Recovery The arm movement of the backstroke consists of an underwater pull and a straight arm recovery out of the water. As the student finishes the underwater pull, her hand will lay next to her thigh in the water. The student will then raise the arm straight out of the water with the thumb up, slide the arm past the ear, and begin the underwater pull of the stroke.

Little Finger First Entry After the straight arm recovery, the student will enter the hand into the water again for the underwater pull. The hand should enter the water little finger first so that the palm of the hand faces away from the student.

Bent Arm Pull The underwater pull of the backstroke is performed with a bent arm. After the little finger enters the water, the student will drop their elbow and then push the water down with the palm of the hand. After the pull, the arm should be fully extended, lying along the leg.

Body and Arm Extension During the backstroke it is important that the body stay fully extended. The student should lie back in the water and kick with straight legs and pointed toes. The arms should also be fully extended from the end of the underwater pull to the end of the outer water recovery.

Backstroke Kick The student will flutter kick with slightly bent knees. The toes should be pointed and kick toward the surface of the water.

Body Rotation The backstroke is swum primarily on the side. As the right arm finishes the recovery, the right hip will point toward the pool bottom. As the right arm finishes the underwater pull, the right hip will point toward the sky. As the left arm finishes the recovery, the left hip will point toward the pool bottom. As the left arm finishes the underwater pull, the left hip will point toward the sky. (Hence, one arm is always fully extended above the head, while the other arm is fully extended along the leg.) The entire body should rotate with the hips, except for the head. The head remains still throughout the stroke.

Arm Down Pulsing To perform arm down pulsing, the student will place both arms at his sides. The student will press the chest down and hips up, then press the hips down, allowing the chest to come back up. The student is not kicking his feet, but rather focusing on the motion of the chest and hips.

Yellow Stage: Butterfly

The focus of the Yellow stage is butterfly. A lot of time should be spent on the hip and chest motions of the stroke. The kick and pull of the stroke will not be efficient until students have mastered the pulsing motion of the stroke.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Scenario assist (using flotation) and know how and when to call 911.

During the Yellow stage, you will introduce beginning lifeguard skills to the students. Have the students assist you with various scenarios that may or may not require calling 911. Give the students

job positions such as victim, lifeguard, and manager. Have the students play the roles to the best of their ability. The students will demonstrate when and how to call 911. Teach the student to call 911 in situations such as a heart attack, unconscious victim, and spinal injury. Explain why lifeguards should keep flotation between them and the victim when making an assist. Only teach methods for in-water assists to students at least 10 years of age.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Swim 4 strokes butterfly with only one breath, then remainder of pool freestyle.

The student will perform 4 strokes of butterfly, only lifting the head to breathe once, and then swim the remainder of the pool freestyle. During the butterfly, the student will demonstrate good pulsing techniques, a swing and stretch arm stroke, and a thumb touch.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Use Flotation for Assists First, the students should practice assisting someone in trouble with a pool noodle in a depth of water where they can touch. Teach the students to always keep flotation between them and the victim. Teach the student to give the victim the noodle first, and then help the victim to safety by pulling the noodle, making sure that the victim is holding on securely. Practice with rescue tubes next, allowing the students to jump in and pass the rescue tube to the victim. The students may hold onto the rescue tube, facing the victim, keeping the rescue tube in between, or the students may pull the rescue tube by the rope until the victim is safely to the wall.

Arm Up Pulsing To perform arm up pulsing, the student will place both arms above the head so that they are straight from the shoulders (like Superman). The student is going to press the chest down and hips up, then press the hips down, allowing the chest to come back up. The student is not kicking his feet but rather focusing on the motion of the chest and hips.

Arm Up Pulsing With Scull The student will scull with the hands while performing arm up pulsing. During the scull, the student will move the palms of the hands in and out, in and out.

Lifting Head to Breathe The student will continue arm up pulsing with scull. When the student is ready to breathe, he will lift his head as the hands scull out, and then place the head back in the water to exhale as the hands scull back in.

One Butterfly Stroke to Pulsing The student will add the swing and stretch arm stroke to the arm up pulsing. The student will begin with the arm up pulsing, scull out, and scull in, bringing the hands toward and past the hips. The thumbs will touch the hips as the hands pass to exit the water. The student will perform one swing and stretch arm stroke back into the arm up pulsing position.

Swing and Stretch Arm Stroke The student will begin with her arms straight from the shoulders, scull out, then scull in, bringing the hands toward and past the hips. The hands will exit the water past the hips, and both arms will swing out of the water and stretch back into the arm up pulsing position.

Pulse With Hand Slide Three Times, Then Take Two Swing and Stretch Strokes The student will perform arm up pulsing with scull, allowing the hands to slide in and out three times. Then the student will take two swing and stretch arm strokes. The hand slide will set the rhythm and body motion for executing the swing and stretch arm strokes.

Thumb Touch During the underwater scull of the stroke, the students will touch their thumbs to their hips as they pass to exit the water.

Blue Stage: Breaststroke

The focus of the Blue stage is breaststroke. A lot of time should be spent on the timing of the stroke. Coordination of the pull, breath, kick, and glide may take longer for beginner students. If you refer to breaststroke as the frog stroke, remember that the kick is indeed not a frog kick, with the knees rotating out and bottoms of the feet together, but rather a whip kick, with the knees straight out from the hips and the feet rotating out.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Demonstrate safety concepts.

The students need to demonstrate their understanding of the Starfish Safety Concepts (listed on the last page of the PR book):

- Children should always ask permission before going in, on, or near the water.
- Constant supervision by a designated "child watcher" adult is a must around water.
- Wearing a lifejacket is fun!
- Pool (or lake) water is for swimming, not drinking.
- Feet-first entry into shallow water (any water less than two times your height).
- If someone is in trouble in the water, reach out or throw something that floats.
- Learn to swim.
- Learn CPR and know how and when to call 911.

Swim Skill Benchmark

Swim 30 feet breaststroke with good timing and extension.

The student will swim 30 feet of breaststroke demonstrating proper timing, extension, and a dolphin motion at the end of the kick.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Safety Concepts (Rules) The students will need to demonstrate their understanding of the Starfish Safety Concepts (listed on the last page in the PR Book or back of the report card).

- Children should always ask permission before going in, on, or near the water.
- Constant supervision by a designated "child watcher" adult is a must around water.
- Wearing a lifejacket is fun!
- Pool (or lake) water is for swimming, not drinking.
- Feet- first entry into shallow water (any water less than two times your height).
- If someone is in trouble in the water, reach out or throw something that floats.
- Learn to swim.
- Learn CPR and know how and when to call 911.

Discuss each of the above concepts with your students. They need to be able to understand the concepts enough to talk to their parents about them. You could focus on one concept per day, if you are conducting an 8-lesson class, and have the students spend some time discussing the concept with their parents at the end of the class. If parents are not available on deck, discuss the concepts with the students, and then conduct a question-and-answer game with the students. Regardless, provide the parents with information regarding the concepts, so that they can continue the learning process at home.

Breaststroke Kick The breaststroke kick begins with straight legs and pointed toes. The students will bring their heels up to a 90-degree angle (bending the knees without pulling them under the body), then with flexed feet and toes pointed out, kick the feet out (allowing the knees and hips to spread), and then squeeze the legs back together into the starting position (straight legs and pointed toes).

Breaststroke Kick With Support Have the students practice the breaststroke kick with support, such as a kickboard, noodle, or lifeguard tube. When using a kickboard, have the students hold the kickboard with their arms outstretched. When using a noodle, have the students place the noodle behind their back and under their arms, holding the ends of the noodle in their hands. If you use a lifeguard tube to practice this skill, have the students place their arms over the lifeguard tube and possibly even perform the breaststroke arm action simultaneously.

Breaststroke Pull The breaststroke pull begins with the arms stretched out in front, palms facing away from each other. The students will spread the arms apart, then bend their elbows, allowing

the hands to scoop in toward the chest. The hands will come together in front of the chest and then cut through the water back to the beginning position. As the arms are returning to the beginning position, the shoulders will squeeze in, allowing the students to really create a surge forward. Use verbal cues such as "Spread it, scoop it, cut it."

Breaststroke Pull With Support Have the students practice the breaststroke pull with support, such as a pull buoy or noodle. When using a pull buoy, have the students place the buoy between their thighs and instruct them not to kick. Work with the students on performing correct pulling techniques and even the dolphin motion (when ready). Advanced students may perform this drill while wrapping their ankles around a noodle. This skill is a little tricky but can be performed well if the student has a strong upper body and incorporates the dolphin motion.

Combined Kick and Pull The student will begin the breaststroke pull. As the student's hands come together in front of the chest, the student will lift her head to breathe, and pull her heels up to begin the kick. After the student inhales, she will begin her surge forward, placing her face back in the water. The student will kick the legs around just in time to have the legs come together as the arms return to the beginning position.

Dolphin Motion at Kick End As the students kick the legs around, they are going to push their hips up and the center of their chest down, creating a dolphin motion at the end of the kick. This will simulate a rolling motion in the stroke, rather than swimming a flat breaststroke. The rolling motion will enhance the student's surge through the water, allowing for a more efficient glide between strokes.

Green Stage: Endurance

The student has now learned the four strokes of competitive swimming. It is now time to build their endurance in each of the strokes, hence the focus of this stage. Students will also be introduced to various training techniques that may be used for a lifetime, whether in competitive swimming or casual exercise.

Safety Skill Benchmark

Survival float or tread water for 2 minutes.

Students have been introduced to the survival float and treading water; however, they have not really had to perform these safety skills for any great period of time. Therefore, to complete stage Green, the student is going to have to survival float or tread water for 2 minutes. Building endurance in the safety skills will simultaneously build comfort and confidence, which will be much needed if the student is ever in distress.

Water Skill Benchmark

Swim 175 yards: 50 yards freestyle, 50 yards backstroke, 50 yards breaststroke, 25 yards butterfly.

At the completion of stage Green, students will have built up enough endurance with each stroke to begin comfortably on a swim team or to take up swimming as a lifetime activity. The students will perform each stroke well, focusing on all of the lead-up skills taught throughout the Stroke School curriculum. The student should also incorporate the lead-up skills learned in stage Green such as diving, flip turns, and open turns.

Lead-Up Skills and Drills

Survival Float/Treading Water The students have already been taught how to survival float and tread water. The focus will be turned to endurance. Have the students practice both so that they become efficient in both. If a student is more confident with one skill over the other, use that skill to complete the 2-minute benchmark.

Racing Dive The students have already been taught the first three diving stages. Now we will teach stages four and five, which will develop proper racing dive technique. *Stage 4: Stretch.* The students will place both toes over the edge, feet shoulder width apart. When you say "Take your mark," the students will bend their knees and pull back on the edge of the pool with both hands. The hands may be placed in between or outside of the feet. The students should tuck their

chin, so that they are looking at their knees. You will say "Go," and the students will throw their arms up into a streamline position while simultaneously pushing with their feet. The students should dive horizontally into the water, allowing them to streamline kick quickly to the surface and begin stroking. The students may perform a track start dive in which they will place one set of toes over the edge, while the other foot stands on the toes away from the pool's edge. *Stage 5: Start.* Now perform stage 4 from a starting block.

Freestyle Open Turn The students will swim freestyle toward the wall. As the students approach the wall, their last overarm stroke will grab the wall. The students will then pull their feet up to the wall. The students will lean back, let go of the wall, and push off underwater in a streamline position. The students should kick streamline to the surface, then begin freestyle swimming again.

Backstroke Open Turn The students will swim backstroke toward the wall. As the students approach the wall, their last straight arm stroke will glide into the wall. The students will grab the wall and then turn the body around to face the wall while simultaneously bringing the legs up to touch the wall. The students will then push off the wall underwater in a back streamline position. The students should kick streamline to the surface, then begin backstroke swimming again.

Freestyle Flip Turn The students will swim freestyle toward the wall. As the students approach the wall, they will use their last stroke to flip themselves over. If the pool bottom has lines, gauge the number of strokes from the end of the "T." The students will perform a front flip in the water. The students will flip approximately 270 degrees so that they stop with their feet on the wall and their head underwater looking at the surface of the water. The students will push off streamline on their back, then immediately roll over into a front streamline position until they reach the surface. Once they are at the surface, they will continue on with their freestyle swimming. If the student is unable to flip over, work on just a front flip in the water before attempting a flip turn. Have the student scrunch up in a ball with her head to her knees and her arms wrapped around her legs. Physically flip the swimmer over in the water. Next, have the student scrunch up in a ball, placing her feet on your upper legs. Allow the swimmer to push off your legs, this time using her arms, and help her flip over if needed. You can also break the flip turn down into parts: swim into the wall and flip, flip and place feet for push off, push off wall.

Backstroke Flip Turn The students will swim backstroke toward the wall. As the students approach the wall, they will roll over and use their last stroke to perform a freestyle flip turn. At the completion of the flip, the students will push off the wall streamline on their back and kick to the surface. Once at the surface, they will continue on with their backstroke swimming. If backstroke flags are available, teach your students to count their strokes from the flags to the wall. This will keep students from rolling over too soon or hitting their head. More advanced students may be taught to perform underwater dolphin kicks in streamline as they push off the wall and rise to the surface.

Breast/Fly Open Turn The students will swim toward the wall. No matter whether they are swimming breaststroke or butterfly, they will touch the wall with both hands. The students will then bring their legs up, drop one hand while leaning back, allowing them to push off into a streamline position.

Swim in Trains Students will be instructed to swim a multiple number of distances such as 4 × 50s or 8 × 25s. Students will push off the wall, one behind the other, and swim the distance they have been instructed to do. When the last student touches the wall, having finished the appropriate distance, the first student will push off the wall to begin the next round. Students will receive only as much rest as it takes from the time they touch the wall, having finished a round, until it is their turn to push off the wall for the next round.

Swim on Intervals Students will be instructed to swim a multiple number of distances, with each distance to take place within a certain amount of time (i.e., 4 × 50s on the 2 minutes or 8 × 25s on the 30 seconds). The students will have the specified amount of time to perform one of the distances. The time should be long enough to allow for a little rest. When the time is up, the students will begin on the next distance. They will continue until they have completed the specified number of distances. For instance, if you give the students 4 × 50s on the 2 minutes, the students will have 2 minutes to swim one 50 and then rest. After the 2 minutes are up, the students will begin on the next 50, and so on. Beginner students should be at least 10 seconds apart to be able to swim safely, without swimming into one another.

Table 7.1 Starfish Stroke School Games and Experiential Activities

Name and objective	Suggested stage	Teaching points
Front Balance Kick To develop proper head position by pressing the chest down and forward (development of front quadrant swimming)	White	Students will kick looking straight down at the bottom of the pool with the arms tight against the sides of the body and the palms of the hands up. Side breathe by rotating hips and shoulders approximately 45 degrees to shift your core balance. Maintain a tight body streamline with an easy kick, and emphasize a slight hump back, which will allow a slight frontal press while maintaining the core balance.
Sidekick Right/Left Streamline To loosen hip flexor muscles and ankles and develop the right amount of knee bend during the kick	White	Front kick in a streamline body position with one hand on top of the other and the upper arms squeezing the ears, looking straight at the bottom of the pool. Kick both feet, counting one foot kick 8 times, and rotate on the right side, kick 8 times, rotate to the center streamline, kick 8 times, and then rotate and kick 8 times on the left side; repeat.
One-Arm Stroke Drill To develop a center line pull, balance, and body rotation during freestyle	White	From a front balance kicking position, students will stroke freestyle with one arm, emphasizing the hand entry position, hip rotation, center line pull, and high elbow recovery. The opposite hand is extended straight out in front of the body but should not scull. More advanced stroke technicians may have the nonstroking hand tight on the front of the thigh and practice rotating the shoulder as part of the drill.
Fingertip Glide To develop high elbow recovery and a centerline pull	White	During the high elbow recovery, the thumb recovers close to the side of the body up to the armpit, where it swings out with a wide recovery, allowing the fingertips to drag in the water. The fingertips enter the water directly in front of the shoulder, with the arm extended and palm down. Emphasize proper body balance and positioning in the water.
Front Touch Stroke (Catch-Up) To develop high elbow recovery, full extension on hand entry, and fingertip entry during freestyle	White	Streamline push off with hands together in front. Stroke alternating arms, but delay the timing so that there are five kicks between each arm stroke while both arms are extended in streamline. Emphasize center line pull, finish below the hips, high elbow recovery, and proper hand entry placement.
Chicken Wing Swim To develop a high elbow with front/ forward of elbow for freestyle recovery	White	Start from the front touch stroke drill position and stroke using a center line pull. As the hand recovers have the thumb lock into the armpit, emphasizing a high elbow front rotation, the thumb releases with a wide low recovery to the front streamline position. Repeat with the opposite hand. Six beat kick is best.
Delayed Elbow Swim To develop a high elbow recovery and body balance for freestyle	White	During the high elbow recovery, pause momentarily to emphasize the height and slight rotation forward. There is a slight glide during the delayed recovery.
Tennis Ball Swim To create a full arm press and lateral rotation while swimming freestyle	White	Hold a tennis ball in each hand. Swim emphasizing the balanced body position and the hand and forearm "feel" for the stroke. This drill is ideal to correct improper sculling of the hands and to correct poor balanced body position.
Triple Switch To develop a straight arm recovery	White	Rest both hands on the thighs. Lift one arm straight up to a 45-degree angle, then a 90-degree angle, and then rotate the arm all the way around. Perform the three movements with one arm and then rotate the body to perform the movements with the other arm.

Name and objective	Suggested stage	Teaching points
Backstroke Balance Kick To develop body roll (lateral rotation) and a balanced/relaxed head position for backstroke	Red	Kick in a streamline body position with one hand over the other and the upper arms squeezing the ears tightly, stretch out with the head looking straight up and the hips riding high at water level. Next, place both hands on top of the thighs and kick while maintaining a high body position with your head straight. Finally, cross the arms over the chest and arch in the small of the back to maintain the high body position while maintaining a shallow kick.
One-Arm Right/Left Pull To develop a bent elbow under water for a bent arm pull for backstroke	Red	Swim using only one arm emphasizing little finger entry and exit (palm away). The hips should shift just prior to the hand entry and roll the opposite shoulder to simulate when the stroke would be taken. The hand starts out straight over the head, and once you are comfortable with your lateral roll, place the hand, not pulling, on top of the thigh. The head position is independent of the pull.
Bottom "Pop" To develop a strong finish per stroke, little finger entry, and little finger exit for backstroke	Red	Keep the hands underwater, only working the bottom of the stroke. Recover the hands along the body to mid-torso. Then, with the thumb up, "pop" the finish of the stroke. Remember to rotate the finish so that the little finger is up and ready to recover. Check for independent head position and lateral body rotation throughout.
Two-Arm Backstroke To loosen the shoulders and develop shoulder rotation for backstroke	Red	Kicking on the back, throw both hands over simultaneously as fast as possible. Arch in the small of the back and be sure to enter and exit with the little finger. This drill does not allow for lateral rotation but does help with increasing flexibility of the shoulders and improving the speed of the recovery.
Back Slap To develop a fast overhead recovery for backstroke	Red	During each recovery bring the hand straight up from the shoulder and then drop it back down on the water where it slaps and recovers as fast as possible. This drill is good for developing fast over-the-body recovery and a deeper catch of the stroke.
Dolphin Kick on Back To develop the right amount of knee bend and hip movement for butterfly	Yellow	Dolphin kick on the back with hands in a tight streamline position. Knees stay along the surface of the water and do not lift out of the water. Emphasize that the kick starts from the chest and works all the way down to the feet.
Balanced Dolphin Kick To develop a good head position, and front press with the chest for butterfly	Yellow	With the arms tight along the sides of the body and the palms facing up, kick dolphin on the stomach and try to press forward with the chest on each kick. Breathe to the front, keeping the chin in the water. Note that dolphin kick is fluid starting at the chest and when used in the stroke is a "little" kick at the time of breathing and a "big" kick when throwing the arms over during recovery. A good explanation of what is to be accomplished will allow for a better performance of this drill.
One Pull, Two Kick To develop a streamlined body position close to the surface with a two beat kick for butterfly	Yellow	Take one complete stroke (pull with little and big kicks) and then with the hands out front in a streamline position, take another little kick followed by a big kick. Watch that the body does not "dolphin dive" during the second set of kicks in the streamline position, but that it remains close to the surface with the press forward and not down.

(continued)

Table 7.1 *(continued)*

Name and objective	Suggested stage	Teaching points
Two Breaths Right, Two Breaths Forward, Two Breaths Left To develop a front press, balance, streamlined body position, proper head position, and high elbow recovery for butterfly	Yellow	Using a normal breathing pattern take two breaths to the right, then two forward, and then two left; repeat as needed for interval. This drill helps correct "dolphin dive" and teaches high elbow recovery. Experienced swimmers can exchange dolphin kick for freestyle kick, which also helps develop the front press.
Butterfly With Fins To develop a 2 beat kick (big-little) for butterfly	Yellow	Swim short distances such as 25 yards using a long streamline breakout with five to seven dolphin kicks. Emphasize the "little" kick during the breathing phase and a "big" kick as the hands exit the water and throw forward on the recovery. Water level should be between the eyebrows and the hairline when not breathing; chin presses forward in the water during the breath.
Breaststroke Kick on Back To develop knee rotation (wide-narrow), and emphasize correct kick mechanics for breaststroke	Blue	From a back streamline position (hands one on top of the other and the upper arms squeezing the ears) kick breaststroke making sure that the knees only lift out of the water slightly. The knees remain almost parallel to the bottom of the pool with the heels recovering to the buttocks; the knees do not pull up under the hips. This is an ideal first drill to see if the kick is correct by noticing if the knees come out of the water or remain at the surface of the water.
Breaststroke Kick Heel Touch To emphasize a full kick recovery to the hips for breaststroke	Blue	Breaststroke kick on the stomach with the arms tight along the body and hands resting near the buttocks. The heels should touch the hands or fingertips if the kick is recovering correctly. This is an excellent drill to discover if the heels are not completely recovering or if the knees are pulled up under the hips incorrectly.
Breaststroke Pull With a Dolphin Kick To develop a front chest press, with a fast recovery of the arms, and hip undulation for breaststroke	Blue	Pulling breaststroke, take a dolphin kick with each pull; this is one big kick per stroke and not the normal double kick per cycle as in butterfly. Accelerate the hand speed through the in-sweep and the front thrust to full streamline extension followed by a short glide. Note that the hip action for breaststroke is the same undulation as is used during the dolphin kick.
One Pull, Two Kick To emphasize a fast recovery and proper timing for breaststroke	Blue	Take a complete stroke of pull and kick, allowing the hands to remain in the front glide position while performing a second kick. This is an ideal drill to teach timing, front glide, and a kick with a strong finish.
Vertical Breaststroke To develop high elbows and a fast (recovery) in-sweep for breaststroke	Blue	Kick breaststroke in a vertical position with the hands at a right angle on the surface sculling. The hands scull in and out and only serve to simulate correct stroke timing. It is best to perform for only 15 to 20 seconds with an equal rest to insure proper form.
6 Pulls and Flip To develop balance, position awareness, and snap for flip turn	Green	Take 6 freestyle pulls, then perform a full flip. Kick hard out of flip and repeat.

Table 7.2 Starfish Stroke School Sample Block Plan

AGES: ANY AGE THAT MEETS PREREQUISITE

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Introductions	Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission
Pool tour	Front balance kick	Front balance kick	Front streamline with kick and rotation to back streamline
May I?	Sidekick right/left streamline	Sidekick right/left streamline	Back streamline with kick and rotation to front streamline
Ask permission	Freestyle using 1-2-3 Breathe	Freestyle using 1-2-3 Breathe	Review freestyle
Streamline on front	High elbow recovery (delayed elbow)	Center line pull and high elbow	Review backstroke
Streamline on back	Thumb Touch (catch-up)	recovery (chicken wing swim)	Arm down pulsing
Front streamline with kick and rotation to back streamline	Center line pull (one-arm stroke drill)	Proper body positioning (tennis ball swim)	Arm up pulsing
Back streamline with kick and rotation to front streamline	Freestyle with body rotation and exhalation in the water	Backstroke kick	Arm up pulsing with scull
Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 overarm pulls, roll to opposite side glide to breathe	Streamline backstroke kick	Triple-switch backstroke drill	Put on lifejacket in the water
Start in side glide, link 3 sets of 3 backstroke pulls, roll to opposite side glide to rest	Triple-switch backstroke drill	Little finger first entry (two-arm backstroke)	Tread water
Smooth the Sand (tread water)	Straight arm recovery (back slap drill)	Bent arm pull (Bottom "Pop" drill)	Survival float
	Survivor (survival float)	Backstroke with good body and arm extension and good body rotation	
		Put on lifejacket in the water	

Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission
Balanced dolphin kick	Safety concepts discussion	Safety concepts Q & A	Group kick with kickboards
Dolphin kick on back	Group kick with kickboards	Group kick with kickboards	Freestyle flip turns
Arm up pulsing with scull	Review freestyle	Breaststroke kick on back	Backstroke flip turns
Lifting head to breathe	Review backstroke	Breaststroke kick heal touch	Review breaststroke with open turns
Swing and stretch arm stroke	Butterfly with fins	One pull, two kick	Review butterfly with open turns
Thumb Touch	Breaststroke pull	Vertical breaststroke	Swim on intervals
One butterfly stroke to pulsing	Breaststroke pull with dolphin kick	Freestyle review with open turns	Racing dives
Pulse with hand slide 3 times and then take 2 swing and stretch strokes	Breaststroke kick	Backstroke review with open turns	Review benchmarks achieved
Butterfly with fins	Breaststroke kick with dolphin motion	Swim freestyle and backstroke in trains	Awards
Racing dives	Breaststroke with combined kick and pull	Racing dives	
	Tread water		
	Survival float		

Table 7.3 Starfish Stroke School Summary Chart

	CURRICULUM AND CORE SKILLS ACHIEVEMENT STAGES				
	White	**Red**	**Yellow**	**Blue**	**Green**
Lead-up skills	Focus: freestyle, introduction to backstroke	Focus: backstroke, introduction to butterfly	Focus: butterfly	Focus: breaststroke	Focus: endurance
	Ask permission to get in	Put on lifejacket in the water	Use flotation for assists	Discuss the Starfish safety concepts (Q & A)	Perform a racing dive
	Swim freestyle with high elbow recovery	Swim backstroke with straight arm recovery	Perform pulsing with arms above the head	Perform breaststroke kicking motion (assisted)	Perform an open freestyle turn
	Swim freestyle with thumb touch	Swim backstroke with little finger first entry	Perform pulsing with arms above the head and scull with hands	Perform breaststroke kick with support (kickboard, float bar, rescue tube, etc.)	Perform an open backstroke turn
	Swim freestyle with center line pull	Swim backstroke with bent arm pull	Lift head to breathe during pulsing	Perform breaststroke arm action (assisted)	Perform a freestyle flip turn
	Swim freestyle with body roll	Swim backstroke with good body and arm extension	Add 1 butterfly arm stroke to pulsing	Perform breaststroke arm action with support (pull buoy, noodle, rescue tube, etc.)	Perform a backstroke flip turn
	Exhale in the water before rolling to breathe	Perform backstroke flutter kick	Pulse with hand slide 3 times then take 2 swing and stretch arm strokes		Perform a breaststroke and butterfly open turn
	Triple-switch backstroke drill	Swim backstroke with body roll	Pull to a thumb touch when performing butterfly arm strokes	Combine arm action and leg kicking	Swim in trains
		Perform arm down pulsing		Incorporate dolphin body motion into breaststroke after the kick	Swim on basic pace clock intervals
Safety skill benchmark	Always ask permission before getting in the water	Put on a lifejacket from in the water, kick 30 ft	Use flotation to reach or throw to assist a swimmer and know when and how to call 911	Discuss the Starfish safety concepts	Tread water or survival float for 2 min
Swim skill benchmark	Swim freestyle 30 ft. with body stretched out and consistent form; swim 30 ft. of triple-switch backstroke	Swim 30 ft. backstroke with straight arm recovery, body roll, good arm and body extension; perform arm down pulsing for 15 ft	Swim 4 strokes butterfly with only one breath, then remainder of pool freestyle	Swim 30 ft. breaststroke with good timing and extension	Swim freestyle 50 yards with rolling body motion, high elbow recovery, and body stretch; swim backstroke 50 yards with rolling body motion, straight arm recovery, and body stretch; swim 25 yards butterfly with dolphin body motion, straight arm recovery, and body stretch; swim 50 yards breaststroke with proper timing and body stretch; perform freestyle and backstroke flip turns and butterfly and breaststroke open turns

8

Starfish Swim Team Core Competencies Teaching Model

The Starfish Swim Team is designed to be a "pre-team" program. For children who have developed an interest in competitive swimming, the Starfish Swim Team provides an opportunity to learn training and racing techniques in preparation to join a summer league or USA Swimming team. The goal is to increase fitness and endurance levels while introducing the sport of competitive swimming to individuals who are learning or improving strokes. A training center may set any prerequisite for participation, but at a minimum, participants should be able to swim freestyle with side breathing for 25 yards.

Depending upon the ability level of the participants, Starfish Swim Team can utilize many of the stroke drills described for the Stroke School. Workouts should last approximately 1 hour and contain stroke development drills, sprints and racing, interval training, endurance set, and instruction in swim team terminology and technique.

Safety Considerations

Follow these safety guidelines when conducting a workout:

- A lifeguard or other designated child watcher should provide constant and dedicated surveillance (no other duties) during the workout.
- Instruct swimmers to swim down the right side of the lane, and back on the left side of the lane to avoid collisions. Use a 5 second minimum send-off. A 10-second send-off is preferred for developmental swimmers.
- Do not teach diving or starts from the side or a block in water less than 6 feet deep. Feet-first entries are required during all swim meet warm-up sessions.
- Do not allow or conduct hypoxic (breath-holding) drills or activities.

Planning a Workout

Each Starfish Swim Team practice should contain a warm-up, set of drills, sprint or distance focus set, warm-down, and fun activity such as a game or relay races.

Step 1: Determine your focus for the practice (i.e., freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, medley, meet preparation, racing, etc.).

Step 2: Determine the equipment that you will need for the practice (i.e., kickboards, pull buoys, tennis balls, fins, etc.).

Step 3: Plan a warm-up activity. The warm-up should consist of a nonstop kick, nonstop swim, or a little of everything such as a 100 kick, 100 swim, 100 drill. The purpose of the warm-up is to get the swimmers in the water and moving, loosening their muscles up. Do not make the warm-up too complex, as swimmers often do not arrive to practice at the same time. Young swimmers cannot usually be held accountable for arriving late to practice. Make the warm-up session easy to comprehend so that late arrivals can quickly get in and get moving.

Step 4: Plan a set of drills. If the focus of your practice is a certain stroke, then do a set of drills focusing on that stroke. You could also use this time to work on starts and turns. The set of drills should break down a certain technique, allowing the swimmers to focus on the various parts of the stroke or activity.

Step 5: Plan a sprint or distance focus set. This is the set that will really get the swimmers' heart rates up, pushing them to their limits. Whether the focus is fast short distances, or moderately-paced long distances, the swimmers should focus on doing their best to achieve a certain goal, whether it be swimming at a certain speed or simply completing the set. For beginner swimmers, this set may just consist of more stroke work.

Step 6: Plan a warm-down. The warm-down may consist of a long kick or swim or even a few laps of their choice. The warm-down should be low impact, allowing the body to rest and relax.

Step 7: Plan a fun activity. Swimmers love games and relay races. If you are preparing for a meet, consider choosing some type of meet preparation activity instead.

Swim Meets

Your training center may choose to offer swim meets to your students. The swim meets may consist of only your team, or your team may be part of a league. Regardless, the swim meets should focus on improving skills and not winning or losing. Meet participation should be optional for the students.

Take the time to teach students about heat and lane assignments, whistle blasts, heat sheets, the timing system, etc. Use the swim meets as a learning opportunity so that swimmers become comfortable with the meet setting before moving on to a more competitive swim team. Students should be taught the competitive swimming rules during classes; however, whether you choose to disqualify students at this stage is up to you. Consider inviting older swimmers from other teams to act as your officials. Students will not really be disqualified but rather reminded of the proper swimming techniques.

Award students with first meet medals, heat winner ribbons, treasure chest items, and even stickers or candy. For students who have participated in meets before, consider awarding "Star Swimmer" or "Personal Best Time" ribbons. Make the meet environment as fun and comfortable as possible.

Example Workouts

Sample Workout 1

150 kick with board, stroke of choice	5 minutes
6 × 25 freestyle drill (fingertip drag/catch-up)	10 minutes
6 × 25 streamline backstroke kick/backstroke swim	10 minutes
Lane 1 (beginners) 8 × 25 alternate freestyle/backstroke in trains	15 minutes
Lane 2 (more advanced) 4 × 50 freestyle in trains	
6 × 25 underwater butterfly kick with fins	10 minutes
Game: Sharks and Minnows	10 minutes

Time: 1 hour **Yards:** 800

Sample Workout 2

100 kick choice, 100 swim choice	10 minutes
8 × 25 drill/swim with 2 of each stroke (Drills: one pull/two kick fly, double arm backstroke, one pull/two kick breaststroke, delayed elbow freestyle)	15 minutes
Lane 1 (beginners) 12 × 25s Individual Medleys (IM) order (fly, back, breast, and free)	20 minutes
Lane 2 (more advanced) 3 × 100 Individual Medleys (100 IM = 25 fly, 25 back, 25 breast, and 25 free)	
4 × 25 choice of stroke	5 minutes
Medley relays	10 minutes

Time: 1 hour **Yards:** 800

Sample Workout 3

100 swim choice	5 minutes
2 × 25 breaststroke kick with board	5 minutes
2 × 25 breaststroke 1 pull, 2 kick	5 minutes
2 × 25 breaststroke with 2-second glide	5 minutes
Lane 1 (beginners) 8 × 25 freestyle build-up, 4 × 25 sprint	20 minutes
Lane 2 (more advanced) 4 × 50 freestyle build-up, 2 × 50 sprint	
6 × 25 underwater kick with fins	10 minutes
Breaststroke relays	10 minutes

Time: 1 hour **Yards:** 600

Sample Workout 4

200 kick choice	10 minutes
8 × 25 free (6 pulls and flip)	10 minutes
8 × 25 freestyle flip turns (swim from flags to wall and back to flags)	10 minutes
Lane 1 (beginners) 4 × 50 freestyle with fins	10 minutes
Lane 2 (more advanced) 2 × 100 freestyle with fins	
8 × 25 streamline backstroke kick	10 minutes
Game: Follow the Leader	10 minutes

Time: 1 hour **Yards:** 800

Common Swimming Terms

disqualification—A swimmer's performance is not counted because of a rules infraction. A disqualification is shown by an official raising one arm with open hand above his head.

DQ—Slang for disqualification.

dropped time—When a swimmer goes faster than the previous performance, they have "dropped their time."

dryland—The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water.

electronic timing—Timing system operated by battery. The timing system usually has touchpads in the water, junction boxes on the deck with hookup cables, buttons for backup timing, and a computer type console that prints out the results of each race. Some systems are hooked up to a scoreboard that displays swimmers' times.

event—A race or stroke over a given distance.

false start—When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn. One false start will disqualify a swimmer or a relay team, although the starter or referee may disallow the false start due to unusual circumstances.

flags—Pennants that are suspended over the width of each end of the pool approximately 15 feet from the wall. Swimmers use the flags during backstroke to judge how far away the wall is.

heat—A division of an event when there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are compiled by swimmers' times after all heats of the event are completed.

heat award—A ribbon or coupon given to the winner of a single heat at an age-group swim meet.

heat sheet—The pre-meet printed listings of swimmers' seed times in the various events at a swim meet. These sheets vary in accuracy, since the coaches submit swimmers' times many weeks before the meet. Heat sheets are sold at the admissions table and are used mainly to make sure the swimmers have been properly entered in all the events they signed up for. Parents enjoy looking at the seedings prior to the race, plus swimmers can tell the order the events will be conducted and get a rough idea of how long the meet sessions will last.

high point—An award given to the swimmer scoring the most points in a given age group at a swim meet. All meets do not offer high point awards.

illegal—Doing something against the rules that is cause for disqualification.

individual medley (IM)—A swim event using all four of the competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.

interval—A specific elapsed time for swimming or rest used during swim practice.

lane—The specific area in which a swimmer is assigned to swim (i.e., Lane 1 or Lane 2). In pools with starting blocks at only one end, lanes are numbered from right (Lane 1) to left (Lane 8).

lane lines—Continuous floating markers attached to a cable stretched from the starting end to the turning end for the purpose of separating each lane and quieting the waves caused by racing swimmers.

lap—One length of the course. Sometimes may also mean down and back (two lengths) of the course.

long course—A 50-meter pool.

meet—A series of events held in one program.

no time (NT)—An abbreviation used on a heat sheet to designate that the swimmer has not swum the event before.

officials—The certified, adult volunteers who operate the many facets of a swim competition.

pace clock—The large clocks with highly visible numbers or second hands, positioned at the ends or side of a swimming pool so that the swimmers can read their times during warm-ups or swim practice.

relay—A swimming event in which four swimmers participate as a relay team, with each swimmer swimming an equal distance of the race.

scratch—To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate.

short course—A 25-yard or -meter pool.

start—The beginning of a race. The dive used to begin a race.

starter—The official in charge of signaling the beginning of a race and insuring that all swimmers have fair takeoff.

timer—The volunteers sitting behind the starting blocks or finish end of the pool, who are responsible for getting watch times on events and activating the backup buttons for the timing system.

touchpad—The removable plate (on the end of pools) that is connected to an automatic timing system. A swimmer must properly touch the touchpad to register an official time in a race.

warm-down—The loosening swimmers do after a race or at the end of swim practice.

warm-up—The practice and loosening session swimmers do before the meet or their event is swum. Also often held at the beginning of each swim practice.

Table 8.1 Starfish Swim Team Sample Block Plan

STAGE: BEGINNER (ABLE TO SWIM 25 YARDS FREESTYLE AND BACKSTROKE)
AGES: ANY AGE THAT MEETS PREREQUISITE

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Introductions Pool tour May I? Ask permission 2 × 25 side glide with kick 2 × 25 freestyle kick in streamline with side glide air recovery 2 × 25 freestyle with 3 × 3 breath pattern 2 × 25 freestyle (delayed elbow/catch-up) 2 × 25 backstroke kick in streamline 2 × 25 backstroke 2 × 25 triple-switch backstroke 2 minutes tread water	Ask permission 2 × 25 freestyle kick with board 2 × 25 freestyle with 3 × 3 breath pattern 2 × 25 freestyle (catch-up with board) 2 × 25 backstroke 2 × 25 two arm backstroke 2 × 25 backstroke 2 × 25 6 freestyle strokes and flip 4 freestyle flip turns from flags	Ask permission 4 × 25 streamline kick (back/free) 4 × 25 backstroke/freestyle 2 × 25 butterfly kick with fins arms at side 2 × 25 streamline butterfly kick with fins 4 × 25 from mid-pool freestyle with flip turns 2 minutes tread water	Ask permission 4 × 25 kick with board (free/back) 2 × 25 free with fins 2 × 25 backstroke with two arms 2 × 25 butterfly kick with fins arms at side 4 × 25 butterfly with fins 6 backstroke turns from flags
Day 5	**Day 6**	**Day 7**	**Day 8**
Ask permission 2 × 25 breaststroke kick with board 2 × 25 breaststroke kick on back 2 × 25 breaststroke 2 × 25 breaststroke 2-second glide 4 breaststroke turns from flags 4 butterfly turns from flags Dives	Ask permission 4 × 25 streamline kick choice 2 × 25 freestyle 2 × 25 breaststroke 2 × 25 backstroke 2 × 25 butterfly 2 x 25 freestyle delayed elbow 2 minutes tread water	Ask permission 4 × 30 sec. vertical breaststroke 8 × 25 IM order 8 × turns from flags IM order Dives	Ask permission 6 × 25 streamline kick/swim choice 25 yard freestyle relay 25 yard medley relay 25 yard fun relay (dog paddle, Tarzan) 4 × 25 kick with board

Table 8.2 Starfish Swim Team Sample Block Plan

STAGE: INTERMEDIATE (ABLE TO SWIM 25 YARDS OF ALL COMPETITIVE STROKES)
AGES: ANY AGE THAT MEETS PREREQUISITE

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Introductions	Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission
Pool tour	4 × 25 freestyle kick with board	8 × 25 streamline kick (back/free)	8 × 25 kick with board (free/back)
Map it	4 × 25 freestyle	8 × 25 backstroke/freestyle	4 × 25 free with fists
Ask permission	4 × 25 freestyle one-arm stroke drill	4 × 25 butterfly kick with fins arms at side	4 × 25 backstroke with two arms
8 × 25 side glide/3 × 3 freestyle	4 × 25 backstroke kick in streamline	4 × 25 streamline butterfly kick with fins	4 × 25 butterfly kick with fins arms at side
6 × 25 catch-up/delayed elbow	4 × 25 backstroke	8 × 25 from mid-pool freestyle with flip turns	4 × 25 butterfly with fins
8 × 25 streamline backstroke kick/backstroke swim	4 × 25 backstroke bottom pop drill	3 minutes tread water	4 × 25 butterfly without fins
6 × 25 triple-switch backstroke	4 × 25 6 freestyle strokes and flip		12 backstroke turns from flags
3 minutes tread water	8 freestyle flip turns from flags		

Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission
4 × 25 breaststroke kick with board	8 × 25 streamline kick choice	8 × 30 sec. vertical breaststroke	12 × 25 streamline kick/swim choice
4 × 25 breaststroke kick on back	4 × 25 freestyle	16 × 25 IM order	25 yard freestyle relay
4 × 25 breaststroke	4 × 25 breaststroke	12 × turns from flags IM order	25 yard medley relay
4 × 25 breaststroke 2-second glide	4 × 25 backstroke	Dives	25 yard fun relay (dog paddle, Tarzan)
8 breaststroke turns from flags	4 × 25 butterfly		8 × 25 kick with board
8 butterfly turns from flags	6 × 25 freestyle delayed elbow		
Dives	3 minutes tread water		

Table 8.3 Starfish Swim Team Sample Block Plan

STAGE: ADVANCED (ABLE TO SWIM 50 YARDS FREESTYLE AND BACKSTROKE)
AGES: ANY AGE THAT MEETS PREREQUISITE

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Introductions	Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission
Pool tour	100 freestyle kick with board	4 × 50 streamline kick (back/free)	200 kick with board (free/back)
May I?	50 freestyle balance kick	6 × 50 back/free	100 freestyle drill
Ask permission	4 × 50 freestyle	6 × 25 butterfly kick arms at side	50 backstroke drill
6 × 50 side glide/ freestyle	8 × 25 freestyle one-arm stroke drill	6 × 25 streamline butterfly kick	6 × 25 butterfly kick with fins arms at side
8 × 25 catch-up/ delayed elbow	100 streamline backstroke kick	12 × 25 from mid-pool freestyle with flip turns	3 × 50 butterfly with fins
6 × 50 streamline kick/ swim backstroke	4 × 50 backstroke	4 minutes tread water	4 × 25 butterfly kick without fins, arms at side
8 × 25 triple-switch backstroke	4 × 25 backstroke bottom pop drill		2 × 50 butterfly without fins
4 minutes tread water	4 × 25 back slap drill		12 backstroke turns from flags
	12 freestyle flip turns from flags		

Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8
Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission	Ask permission
200 breaststroke kick with board	4 × 50 streamline kick choice	8 × 1-minute vertical breaststroke	8 × 50 streamline kick/ swim choice
6 × 25 breaststroke kick on back	8 × 50 freestyle	8 × 25 IM order	25 yard freestyle relay
4 × 50 breaststroke	6 × 50 breaststroke	8 × 50 IM order	25 yard medley relay
6 × 25 breaststroke 2-second glide	4 × 25 backstroke	8 × 25 IM order	25 yard fun relay (dog paddle, Tarzan)
12 breaststroke turns from flags	2 × 25 butterfly	12 x turns from flags IM order	300 kick with board
12 butterfly turns from flags	6 × 25 freestyle delayed elbow	Dives	
Dives	2 minutes tread water		

9

StarFun and Fitness Core Competencies Teaching Model

The StarFun and Fitness activities introduce children to lifetime aquatic fun and fitness. StarFun and Fitness is not organized by color stages, and it does not have benchmark skills like the other Starfish Swimming courses, since the activities are designed to introduce a wide variety of experiences. Each activity is designed to be conducted independently—the skills don't build upon each other—and the curriculum can be adapted to the ability level and age of the participant. Each activity has a specific curriculum for instructors to follow. The activities may be conducted by a certified lifeguard, swim instructor, or trained individual of the activity.

This chapter introduces ideas for eight activities that can be conducted as stand-alone sessions, combined together for a multi-session program, or customized for groups such as camps, scouts, or schools. The eight activities presented in this chapter include water safety, swim skill development, fitness swimming, water exercise, pool games, introduction to triathlon, introduction to snorkeling, skin diving and scuba diving, and introduction to kayaking.

Safety Considerations

The curriculum contains many activities for beginner and advanced swimmers, so you should adapt the activities to the level of your participants. Other topics may be added as long as they stay within one of the core lifetime aquatic activities.

Each activity should revolve around "Be safe and have fun!" behavior. Participants should be reminded of water safety lessons during each activity. Incorporate safety into each activity so that participants leave the program with a greater understanding of water safety, actions to take in emergency situations, and ways to avoid emergency situations.

A certified lifeguard should always be present to provide emergency care, and a surveillance plan must be set up and implemented so that constant and dedicated scanning (no other duties) of the water is provided during the activity.

Conducting StarFun and Fitness Activities

Your lesson plans for StarFun and Fitness programming may range from one hour of instruction to eight hours of instruction; it depends on which program you are teaching. Regardless, each activity should begin with an introduction. The introduction should be an overview of what the students are going to learn during the day's class. Then have the students perform age- and stage-appropriate skills from each of the five areas of focus identified for each activity. Conclude each class with an overview of lessons learned. Other topics may be added as long as they stay within one of the core lifetime aquatic activities.

Water Safety

The Water Safety curriculum focuses on the five core objectives of the StarGuard program: prevention, surveillance, aquatic rescue, emergency care, and personal safety. All activities should reinforce safe behavior at the pool. Children need to know how to recognize and what to do in an unsafe situation. Advanced skills could be grouped together as an introduction to a junior lifeguard program.

Beginner Activities

Prevention:

- Overview of pool rules
- The importance of the lifeguard

Surveillance:

- Pool walkabout (identify safe and unsafe areas)

Aquatic rescue:

- Reach or throw but never go
  - Ring buoy
  - Noodle, towel, stick
  - Lifejacket
  - Arm
  - Leg

Emergency care:

- How to help someone when they are in trouble
  - Pool vs. beach
  - Identify dangers
  - Follow safety advice
- How and when to call 911
- What to do in an aquatic emergency

Personal safety:

- Survival swim
- How to put on a lifejacket
  - Identify lifejacket vs. personal flotation devices
  - Identify uses for lifejackets
  - Properly put on in shallow water and on land
- How to jump safely into shallow water
- How to jump safely into deep water

More Advanced Activities (ages 10 and up)

Prevention:

- Introduction to bloodborne pathogens

Aquatic rescue:

- Front and rear rescues
  - Noodle rescues (scenario)
  - Rescue tube rescues (scenario)
- Compact jumps with tube
- Compact jumps from guard stand

Emergency care:

- Observe rescue breathing
- Observe CPR
- Lifejacket relay
  - Partner tow (unconscious scenario)

Personal safety:

- Lifejacket relay
  - Forward movement on the front and back
- Putting on a lifejacket in deep water
- Introduction to first aid

Swim Skill Development

The Swim Skill Development activity focuses on the five core competencies of the Starfish Swim School: trust and submersion, body position and air recovery, forward movement and direction change, rotary movement, and integrated movement. Activities should represent swimming as not only a lifesaving skill, but also as a lifetime activity.

Beginner Activities

Trust and submersion:

- Start with an on-land familiar activity (read story, play familiar game)
- Jumping-in games (trust through challenge)
- Climbing in and out activities
- Walking in the water (different directions, make animal sounds, kangaroos, monkeys, ducks, walk like soldiers, walk through jello, distance goals, etc.)
- Use goggles or mask
- Count fingers
- Identify colors
- Look at each other underwater
- Wave at each other underwater
- Scream or sing underwater
- Pick up objects off bottom
- Treasure hunt
- Tickle toes

Body position and air recovery:

- Blowing out candles
- Blowing objects on surface (light balls, floats)
- Straws
- Fireman (vertical bob on pole)
- Roll over
- Flotation (arm bands, belts, bars, etc.)
- Toy on tummy (back float)

More Advanced Activities

Forward movement and direction change:

- Hard kicks
- Soft kicks
- Loud kicks
- Quiet kicks
- Vertical kick
- Streamline
- Obstacle course
- Side kick
- Fins
- Flotation (kickboards, belts, bars, etc.)
- Dog paddle
- Underwater races
- Reach and pull

Rotary movement:

- Side glide drills (with and without flotation)
- Rotation drills (with and without flotation)

Integrated movement:

- 1-2-3 breathe
- Linked 3 × 3
- Hang dog (tread)
- Jellyfish float
- Timed survival ("Survivor")
- Treasure hunt (surface dive)
- Diving

Fitness Swimming

The Fitness Swimming curriculum focuses on the five core skills of the Starfish Stroke School: freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and endurance. Activities should promote good swimming technique and fitness. The goal is to help swimmers become more efficient in the water and learn the benefits of swimming for exercise. Advanced students should be introduced to competitive swimming rules and lingo.

Beginner Activities

Freestyle and backstroke:

- Kick sets
- Use fins
- Use flotation to swim strokes

More Advanced Activities

Freestyle:

- Freestyle drills

Backstroke:

- Backstroke drills

Breaststroke:

- Breaststroke drills

Butterfly:

- Butterfly drills

Endurance:

- Competitive starts
- Competitive turns
- Starfish Swim Team workout

Water Exercise

The Water Exercise curriculum introduces children to a lifetime activity which, to some degree, does not require the ability to swim. Water exercise is a vertical activity, so participants need to at least be comfortable standing in the water. Skills should focus on the following: proper body mechanics, basic exercise movements, use of exercise equipment, stretching routines, and personal safety.

Beginner Activities

Proper body mechanics:

- Warm-up
- Cardio set
- Muscle set
- Cool-down

Basic exercise movements:

- Jumping jacks
- Water running
- Water walking
- Jumping
- Leg raises
- Kickboxing
- Touch toes

Use of exercise equipment:

- Riding bicycle with noodle
- Around the world (two people stand back to back and pass ball back and forth)

Stretching routines:

- Stretching
  - Arm muscles
  - Leg muscles
  - Neck muscles
  - Abdomen muscles
  - Back muscles

Personal safety:

- Importance of hydration
- Do not overexert

More Advanced Activities

Use of exercise equipment:

- Water jogging with belt
- Use of water weights
- Buoys and paddles
- Steps
- Tethers

Pool Games

The theme of the Pool Games curriculum is "Be safe and have fun!" Activities should reflect the following: safety rules, games with equipment, games without equipment, and teamwork and cooperation. If children are taught fun yet safe games, the pool becomes a safer and enjoyable place to play.

Beginner Activities (held in shallow water)

Safety rules and "Be safe and have fun":

- Obstacle course

Games with equipment and "Be safe and have fun":

- Retrieving items from bottom of pool
- Noodle races

Games without equipment and "Be safe and have fun":

- Marco Polo

More Advanced Activities

Safety rules and "Be safe and have fun":

- Obstacle course in deep water

Games with equipment and "Be safe and have fun":

- Kickboard or pull-buoy relay
- **Poison Balls:** This is a fast-paced water game in which children try to keep "poison" balls out of their team's side of the pool. If they get rid of them all, they win at once, but this is rare. Most games run for a set length of time, say 3 or 5 minutes. When time runs out, the team with the fewest balls on its side of the pool is the winner. The more people playing and the more balls in use, the more exciting the game is.

Games without equipment and "Be safe and have fun":

- Relays
- **Sharks and Minnows:** First, choose one player to be the shark. He or she goes to the middle of the pool while the minnows line up on one side. When the shark calls, the minnows must get to the other side of the pool without being caught. If the shark gets them, they must join him in trying to capture more minnows. The game continues in this way until all the minnows have become sharks. The last one captured plays the shark for the next round. There are no winners and losers in Sharks and Minnows because all the students are on the same team at the end. The game is over when the players get tired of playing.
- **Moby Dick:** Choose one player to be the whale. He or she starts the game as the quiet and well-mannered black whale who floats (or treads water) quietly in the middle of the pool. The fish gather around him and swim in circles. Without warning, the whale shouts, "Thar she blows!" and becomes the ferocious white whale who tries to eat all the little fish. They scramble around the pool and try to avoid getting tagged. The person who gets caught becomes the whale for the next round. If the whale is unsuccessful at capturing a new whale, he calls out "Black whale!" and resumes his docile position in the middle of the pool for a while. The game goes on until the players tire of it.

Teamwork and cooperation:

- **Kickboard and Pull-Buoy Tower:** Place all of your kickboards and pull-buoys into the pool. Divide the players into two groups. Each group will have one player jump into the pool at a time and swim out and pick up one item. After the player returns to the wall with the item, the next player will jump into the pool, and so on. After all of the items are cleared from the pool, the groups will have 5 minutes to build the tallest tower out of the kickboards and pull-buoys.

Introduction to Triathlon

The Triathlon Orientation curriculum introduces children to a sport which involves swimming. Triathlon training takes a lot of commitment, time, and dedication. The skills conducted in triathlon training are not only beneficial exercising techniques but fun. All skills should focus on the following five areas: introduction to triathlons, swimming techniques, water exercises, racing techniques, and open-water vs. pool swimming. Triathletes often have a very particular diet. Instructors should spend a few minutes reviewing healthy eating habits.

Beginner Activities
(held in shallow water)

Introduction to triathlons:

- Introduction to triathlons
  - Who: athletes of all ages
  - What: swimming, biking, running
  - When: the triathlon season runs from April to October
  - Where: Florida, Texas, and California are the most dominant in the U.S. (Triathlons started in the United States in the late 1970s; Australia, Japan, the United States, and most of Europe dominate)
  - Why: great exercise, personal triumph

Water exercises:

- Stretching
- Water running
- Water walking
- Water exercises
  - Jumping jacks
  - Kickboxing
  - Touch toes
  - Leg raises
- Riding bicycle with noodle

Open-water vs. pool swimming:

- Introduction to wetsuits

More Advanced Activities

Swimming techniques:

- Swimming with head out of water (needed in open-water swimming to sight buoy)
- Flipping under lane lines

Water exercises:

- Water jogging with belt
- Cross-country skiing with belt

Racing techniques:

- Drafting
- Group starts

Open-water vs. pool swimming:

- 90-degree turns (swimming around buoys)

Introduction to Snorkeling, Skin Diving, and Scuba Diving

The Snorkeling, Skin Diving, and Scuba Diving curriculum introduces children to the following: equipment, breathing techniques, correct body positions, swimming techniques, and places to go. While skills are taught in a swimming pool, use your imagination and available toys to create an ocean of possibilities. For scuba diving, instructors can partner with a local PADI Dive Center or Resort to introduce students to scuba experience programs such as the PADI Bubblemaker and Seal Team.

Beginner Activities

Equipment:

- Proper fitting of mask, fins, and snorkel
- Care of equipment and environment
- Proper use of equipment

Breathing techniques:

- Airway control
- Clearing snorkel
- Retrieving items from bottom of pool
- Assess breath-holding abilities

Correct body positions:

- Floating
- Kicking on front with arms at side

Swimming techniques:

- Assess swimming abilities
- Underwater swimming

Places to go:

- Oceans
- Swimming pool
- Rivers
- Interesting creatures to see

More Advanced Activities

Equipment:

- Don equipment

Breathing techniques:

- Retrieving items from deep water

Correct body positions:

- Dolphin dives

Places to go:

- PADI Snorkeling, Skin Diver, Bubblemaker and Seal Team programs must be taught by a certified PADI Instructor. Students must be at least eight years old. Contact a local PADI Dive Center or Resort for more information.

Introduction to Kayaking

The Kayaking curriculum introduces students to activities that they may not often have the chance to participate in. Skills should focus on the following five areas: importance of lifejackets, proper ways to enter and exit a kayak, rowing techniques, places to kayak, and boating safety rules. Reinforce the safety issues involved with boating, kayaking, and other water sports.

Beginner Activities

Importance of lifejackets:

- How to put on a lifejacket
  - Importance of lifejackets
  - Demonstrate the flotation of lifejackets
  - Proper way to put on lifejacket on land
  - Demonstrate how to put on lifejacket in deep water

Proper ways to enter and exit a kayak:

- On deck
  - Squat, bottom first, then feet
  - Never stand in a kayak

Rowing techniques:

- Instructor pushes and pulls kayak
  - Children can hold paddle
  - Two children can take a ride together

Places to kayak:

- Overview of places to kayak
  - Never go alone
  - Always tell someone where you are going
  - Check the weather before you go
  - Take lots of water on a hot summer day
  - Never stand in a kayak

Boating safety rules:

- Overview of boating safety rules

More Advanced Activities

Rowing techniques:

- Stopping
- Turning
- Forward movement
- Backward movement
- Swimmer kayaks alone
- Kayak races

Appendix
Worksheets and Resources

WORKSHEET 1

Elements of Effective Teaching

List the expectations you feel are most important in each category.
As a Starfish Swim School instructor you are expected to . . .

Be safe	
Have fun	
Be prepared	
Have patience	
Communicate effectively	

WORKSHEET 2

Safety Training and Aquatic Rescue

1. Walk around the facility where you will teach. List everything you see that is there to prevent an injury, illness, or drowning. Look for the obvious (i.e., equipment) and the subtle (i.e., design features, policy or procedure)

2. List three strategies that you will use to be sure that you are always able to keep your students in your line of sight at all times while you are teaching.

3. List three items of flotation that you may have available to use in the event you would need to make an in-water assist or rescue.

   Why is it important to use flotation when making an assist or rescue?

4. Write the Emergency Action Plan that will be in place at your facility while you are teaching lessons. (Use another sheet of paper if necessary. Plan may be in bullet-point, list, or flow chart format.)

5. Why is it important to wear sunscreen when teaching outdoors?

6. Why is it important to stay hydrated when teaching?

WORKSHEET 3

Communication

Choose the better way to communicate and handle the following situations.

You have a class with six three- and fouryear-olds. Some are fearful and some are very comfortable in the water. You are the only instructor and probably a little overwhelmed. Choose the better way to communicate and handle this situation.

OPTION A

- Sit all the kids on the wall, and call over your supervisor.
- Effectively express your frustration and the need to immediately put these children in the correct groups or you will not be able to continue the lesson.

OPTION B

- Make it work!
- Incorporate activities that keep the students occupied and busy, such as games, moving locations, working with two or three students of similar ability at a time, etc.
- Don't force involvement by the fearful students, but don't ignore them either.
- Don't ask if they want to do something. Tell them to tell you when they are ready. Keep loosely involved with the group and let peer pressure build. As they see others having fun, they will eventually join in because the choice is theirs.
- After class, express your concerns to the Lead/Programmer. Scheduling adjustments will be made or discussed in the office area after class, out of the eyes and ears of the public.

You have a child who will not listen, will not maintain eye contact, keeps jumping in, etc. You would like assistance.

OPTION A

- Keep your attention solely focused on this child to make sure that you can provide discipline.
- When you realize your discipline actions are not working, signal to the supervisor that you need assistance and say, "I can't get this kid to pay attention, what do I do?"

OPTION B

- Keep your group moving and all children engaged in the lesson.
- Signal to the supervisor that you need assistance, and say, "Billy (name) here keeps forgetting the rules. Maybe you can take Billy (name) and go over them again."

You are teaching a skill and have exhausted every idea you know to teach the skill. One student is still not grasping the concept and is still unable to perform. You would like assistance.

OPTION A

- Signal the supervisor that you need assistance.
- Say, "Billy (name) is not getting it. What should I do?"

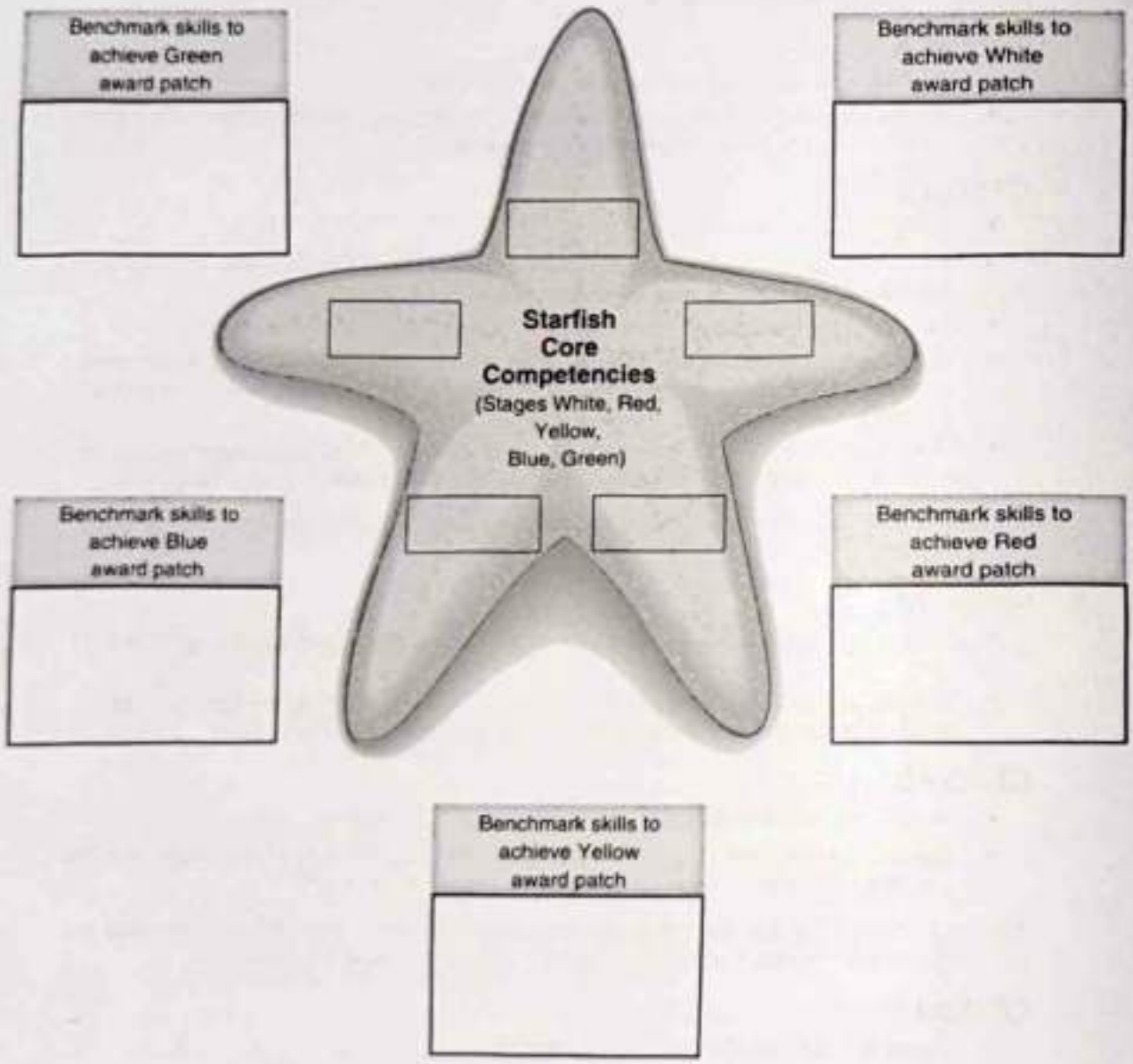
OPTION B

- Signal the supervisor that you need assistance.
- Say, "(Supervisor), would you be able to hop in and help us work on this skill, or suggest a different way we might try?"

WORKSHEET 4

Starfish Teaching Model

Fill in the blanks for the course assigned to you by your Swim Instructor Trainer.


Benchmark skills to achieve Green award patch
Benchmark skills to achieve White award patch
Starfish Core Competencies
(Stages White, Red, Yellow, Blue, Green)
Benchmark skills to achieve Blue award patch
Benchmark skills to achieve Red award patch
Benchmark skills to achieve Yellow award patch

WORKSHEET 5

Class Management

Answer the following questions, and then discuss with your mentor.

1. What creates a positive impression for parents?

2. What do parents want from a swim lesson program?

3. What creates a negative impression for parents?

4. Are we obligated to try to please the parents to a certain extent? Why or why not?

5. What environmental factors might influence your ability to teach your students or your students' ability to learn at the optimum level?

   Affect me (instructor):

   Affect students:

6. What emotional or psychological factors might influence your ability to teach your students or your students' ability to learn at the optimum level?

   Affect me (instructor):

   Affect students:

What can you do to minimize the effects of these environmental and emotional factors?

WORKSHEET 6

Lesson Plans

Using the Starfish Swim School and Starfish Stroke School summary charts, as well as the games and experiential activities, develop a 30-minute lesson plan for each of the swim school stages (white, red, yellow, blue, green) and stroke school.

STARFISH SWIM SCHOOL WHITE STAGE LESSON PLAN

Date: _____ Time: _____

Student Names: _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

Stage: WHITE Benchmarks: _____

Lead-up skills students need to review or learn this lesson:

_____

_____

Drills or activities that will help develop the skills:

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

Equipment needed: _____

Notes: _____

STARFISH SWIM SCHOOL RED STAGE LESSON PLAN

Date: _____ Time: _____

Student Names: _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

Stage: RED Benchmarks: _____

Lead-up skills students need to review or learn this lesson:

_____

_____

Drills or activities that will help develop the skills:

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

Equipment needed: _____

Notes: _____

STARFISH SWIM SCHOOL YELLOW STAGE LESSON PLAN

Date: _____ Time: _____

Student Names: _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

Stage: YELLOW Benchmarks: _____

Lead-up skills students need to review or learn this lesson:

_____

_____

_____

Drills or activities that will help develop the skills:

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

Equipment needed: _____

Notes: _____

STARFISH SWIM SCHOOL BLUE STAGE LESSON PLAN

Date: _____ Time: _____

Student Names: _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

Stage: BLUE Benchmarks: _____

Lead-up skills students need to review or learn this lesson:

_____

_____

_____

Drills or activities that will help develop the skills:

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

Equipment needed: _____

Notes: _____

STARFISH SWIM SCHOOL GREEN STAGE LESSON PLAN

Date: _____ Time: _____

Student Names: _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

Stage: GREEN Benchmarks: _____

Lead-up skills students need to review or learn this lesson:

_____

_____

Drills or activities that will help develop the skills:

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

Equipment needed: _____

Notes: _____

STARFISH STROKE SCHOOL LESSON PLAN

Date: _____ Time: _____

Student Names: _____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

Stage: STROKE SCHOOL Benchmarks: _____

Lead-up skills students need to review or learn this lesson:

_____

_____

Drills or activities that will help develop the skills:

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

_____ Time: _____

Equipment needed: _____

Notes: _____

New Ideas Log

Use this chart to add new drills and activities that you create or learn from your mentor.

Name and objective	Stage	Teaching points	Equipment	Safety considerations

Water Safety Rhymes

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DON'T DRINK THE WATER

Don't drink the water.
Don't drink the water.
See lots of people.
See lots of people.
They all got into the water today.
So many their germs may not stay away.
Did you know swimming water is just for play?
Don't drink the water.

STARFISH, STARFISH

Starfish, starfish, live in the sea.
Starfish love to swim, just like me!
Starfish swim every day.
I want to be a starfish and splash and play.
Starfish, starfish, live in the sea.
Starfish love to swim, just like me.

SLIP, SLOP, SLAP

Slip on a shirt,
Slop on lotion,
Slap on a cap.
Slip, Slop, Slap.
Not a cloud in the sky,
And the temperature's high.
Shirt, lotion, cap.
Slip, Slop, Slap.
As the sun gets stronger,
If you want to stay out longer . . .
Shirt, lotion, cap.
Slip, Slop, Slap.

MAY I?

May I go in the water?
May I go in the pool?
Always ask first,
This is the rule.
May I go to the dock?
May I go near the lake?
Always ask first,
Make no mistake.
Go ask a grown-up,
It's the first thing to do.
Ask them to watch
And keep you in view.

CAN STARFISH MAKE A WISH?

Can starfish make a wish?
If they can, this I know:
Starfish would wish . . .
For you to be safe in the water
both above and below.
Can starfish make a wish?
If they can, this is clear:
Starfish would wish . . .
That a grown-up is watching and
always near.
Can starfish make a wish?
If they can, I would bet:
Starfish would wish . . .
That you learn to swim and love
getting wet.

WATER WONDERS

Where do you like to get wet?
Which will you never forget?
A wild, wet, wonderful
waterpark?
A laughing leap in a lovely
lake?
A rapid, rushing, rolling river?
A pleasant pool packed with
people?
A sandy, salty, surf-filled sea?
A bubbly, bare-body bath?
So many water places to
enjoy!
So much fun for every girl and
boy!

MUCH TO DO

Justin and Jessica have
so much to do:
Swimming on Monday,
Paddling on Tuesday,
Water skiing on
Wednesday,
Fishing on Thursday,
Snorkeling on Friday,
Surfing on Saturday,
Justin and Jessica will
be safe
and have you heard,
So can you!

BUBBLE BUBBLE BREATHE

I jump in.
Bubble, bubble.
Kick, pull, look for the sky.
The water will push me back up
high.
I come to the top.
Breathe, breathe.
Kick, pull, look for the wall.
I can get back to the side even
if I fall.

JUMP

One, two, three, four,
five,
This water is too shallow
for me to dive.
The bottom is too close,
There is danger below.
Jump in feet first,
or ease in slow.

SPLISH SPLASH ZOOM

My arms pull
Splish, splish.
My legs kick
Splash, splash.
I swim through the water
Zoom! Zoom!
Splish, splash, zoom, zoom!
Splish, splash, zoom, zoom!

ZOOM ZOOM FLOAT

I swim along
Zoom! Zoom!
When I get tired I do a roll.
To rest and breathe is my goal.
Time to rest.
Float, float.
Tummy up, head back, toes
down.
I can swim on my back and
move all around.

BRITTANY HAS A LIFEJACKET

Brittany has a lifejacket
It fits so nice and snug.
Everywhere that Brittany goes,
The lifejacket gives a hug.
Brittany went on a boat one day,
"Wear a lifejacket" was the rule.
Brittany was even able to float and play
Wearing a lifejacket in the pool.
And so the lifejacket keeps Brittany afloat
Whenever water is near.
Shore, dock, pool, or boat,
It takes away her fear.
"Why does a lifejacket help you so?"
Brittany wondered every day.
It keeps you on top of the water, you know.
So go have fun and play.

REACH OR THROW

Dan and Nicole went to the pool.
They were bad and broke the first rule.
No one was watching, they shouldn't be
there . . .
They didn't ask and lifejackets they did not
wear.
Dan fell in,
And found he couldn't swim,
And Nicole came running after.
Then Nicole lay down and reached out a
hand
Just as she'd been taught.
But she'd need something stronger and
something much longer . . .
This would take some thought.
There on the deck a swim noodle she
spied,
Reach with the noodle was now the plan.
"Grab on!" was her cry, but she got no
reply.
What could she do now to save Dan?
Nicole knew the noodle would really float
And in the water not to go.
What did they teach if you just can't
reach?
She would give the noodle a throw.
Other things would work just fine,
Many things you know:
A kickboard, a float, even a big toy boat,
Just reach, or throw, DON'T GO!
Dan grabbed on and kicked to the side,
Knowing what never to forget:
Ask a grownup and wear a lifejacket
Whenever you might get wet!

DIVE

If the water is deep,
And you don't want to leap . . .
Reach your hands to the sky,
Like Superman would fly.
Squeeze your arms to your ears
It's easier than it appears.
Bend over, tuck your chin,
And tip yourself in!
Let your hands lead the way.
Don't let your head stray.
Down in the water you'll go
Lift your head to come up slow.

(continued)

Water Safety Rhymes *(continued)*

EYES ON ME!

I love to swim, like I'm a fish in the sea.
I love to swim, but I need your eyes on me.
I swim up and down,
In and around, but I need your eyes on me.
You must be aware, to keep me in your care.
In, on, or near the water you see,
Always, always keep your eyes on me!

About the Editor

Jennifer White is a nationally recognized expert in swim school education. Ms. White is the Swim School Specialist for the Starfish Aquatics Institute. Her responsibilities include oversight of program and curriculum development, training and education, client relations, educational merchandise development, and marketing. Ms. White has developed the industry's premier risk management assessment program for swim school programs, and she is a member of the team supervising a national team of auditors who advise swim school clients in all aspects of safety and risk management. Additionally, she trains swim instructor trainers and swim instructors worldwide.

Ms. White currently leads the Starfish Aquatics Institute's participation in Make a Splash, an initiative of the USA Swimming Foundation dedicated to using the sport of swimming to decrease the number of drowning accidents, foster diversity in the sport, and encourage people of all ages to embrace swimming as a route to a healthier lifestyle. She has been active in bringing swim instruction and risk management in the initiative's pilot program to the Boys and Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta, Georgia, and is currently coordinating safety day programs across the United States on behalf of the initiative.

Before joining the Starfish Aquatics Institute, Ms. White served as program coordinator and administrative director for the Champion Corporation, an aquatic management company that provided operational services for municipal agencies, private clubs, and competitive swim teams. Her many years of competing for and coaching competitive swim teams provided her with the background to assist in coordinating major competitive swimming events, including numerous short- and long-course Georgia State Championships and the USA Swimming Speedo Sectional Championships. In 2005, Ms. White accepted the *Aquatics International* Best of Aquatics Award on behalf of the Champion Corporation and Chatham County Aquatic Center.

Ms. White resides with her husband and two children in Savannah, Georgia.

The Starfish Swimming program materials have been developed through the contributions and peer review provided by dozens of people who have served on the Program Advisory Committee or as members of a training center. More details may be found at www.starfishaquatics.org.

Starfish Swim Instructor Workbook

The *Starfish Swim Instructor Workbook* assists instructors in learning to teach the Starfish Swimming curriculum.

The workbook includes the following features:

- Block plans and charts help even new instructors create effective, student-focused lessons.
- A detailed list of activities provides instructors with ideas that work for the various stages of swim skill development.
- Clear benchmarks help swim instructors focus and evaluate their teaching.
- Specialized methods help instructors integrate water safety into the program and communicate important safety concepts to students and parents.

Starfish Swimming is a nationally and internationally recognized swim instruction program that develops efficient swim skills that will be used for a lifetime.

ABOUT STARFISH AQUATICS INSTITUTE

The Starfish Aquatics Institute is a nationally recognized aquatic certifying agency. Founded in 1999 by Jill White, the organization uses a best-practices approach in training lifeguards, swim instructors, and pool operators. The Starfish Aquatics Institute works toward its mission of reducing drowning and saving lives with innovative certification courses such as Safety Training and Aquatic Rescue (STAR), StarGuard, Starfish Swimming, and AquaTech. The Starfish Aquatics Institute and Human Kinetics have teamed up to deliver online courses and associated educational resources to the national and international network of independently operated training centers who deliver the training to the public. In addition to certification programs, the Starfish Aquatics Institute offers risk management and consulting services such as lifeguard audits to public- and private-sector pool and water park facilities, and it collaborates with other aquatic organizations on projects that improve accountability and save lives.

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